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DIARY OF AN IDLE WOMAN IN SPAIN.

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BY

FRANCES ELLIOT,

AUTHOR OF
'DIARY OF AN IDLE WOMAN IN ITALY AND SICILY,' 'PICTURES OF OLD ROME,' 'OLD COURT LIFE IN FRANCE,' ETC.

A New Edition.

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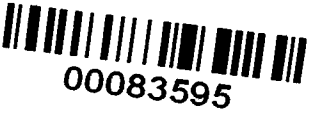
TO

THE PRINCESS DEL DRAGO,

THE BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER OF A

SPANISH QUEEN,

This Book is Dedicated.


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DIARY

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A CITY of boulevards and gardens, quite out of town, and sylvan; the fortress of the Moor; the hunting-box of Charles V., and of his grand-parents, Ferdinand and Isabella; the goal of the weak monk-king, Don Ramiro of Arragon; the castle-town of Alphonso VI.; the furthest outpost of Gothic rule. Such is Madrid!

High on a wooded cliff, the deep valley of the Manzanares winding far below, a snowy palace girds a precipice.

That is all!

No houses, streets or faubourgs—nothing but a solitude of white walls, marble balustrades, carved portals, and lines of endless windows, overlooking hanging gardens, and lofty terraces towering over trees.

Below, on emerald banks, in the cool gorge, I see tents and tilted waggons. The thrum of guitars and castanets

drifts upwards; the drone of Moorish ballads, the cries of children, men leaping in the wild dances of old Spain; swinging cudgels, and flinging arms in Pyrrhic rounds; large-eyed Gitanas and brown-faced peasants looking on.

I have arrived on the festival of the plough-boy, St Isidor, the patron of Madrid. His hermitage lies on the further bank—a little church on a bare knoll, set out with eating-booths and toy-stalls, where they tell me you must kiss a glass whistle in his honour, and hang an earthen pig-bell on your button; for, in the old time, when Isabel the Catholic was hunting on these hills, she was attacked by a boar of great size and fierceness, and the plough-boy saint (whose farm-work the angels did for him) suddenly appeared, and protected her from all harm.

Now emerging from the blank desolation of the passes of the Guadarrama, where all nature hardens into granite blocks, stony peaks, and rugged mountain screens—a juniper tree, or scraggy wind-torn oak, the only foliage—the effect of all this is magical.

Nor is this first impression of Madrid lost on further acquaintance. Those verdant glens and waving hill-tops wandering off into infinite space hold no suburbs. Just the long serried lines of boundless mountain—plain, stern, rude, appalling—and the laughing avenues of the green boulevard-bound city all aglow with life; nothing between.

It may have been an unkingly act of Charles V. to remove '*the only court*' from the old landmarks of Leon, Valladolid, Toledo, and Seville, to plant his palace on an airy height, hemmed about by woods; but I can sympathise with him thoroughly.

As a lover of forest and garden, trees and fruitery, of sunshine and chequered shade, and the keen breath of mountain air, sweet with thyme and lavender, Charles was fully justified. That Philip followed in his father's footsteps was but natural; only, when Madrid became prosperous and noisy, he betook himself to the gloomy walls of the Escurial.

Then Philip V. laid the foundations of the present palace, but in his turn became absorbed with the mountain beauties of La Granja and forsook Madrid

Charles V. delighted to live here. He planted those lovely retiros, parks, and gardens which lend it such a

charm ; such buildings as there are in Madrid date from his reign. But above all these royalties it is Dame Nature who is Queen, and the fair palace on the hill, with park and terraces, has prospered and grown beautiful, gathering the laughing town about it, because she has been evoked and allowed to rule.

. . . . . .

All poetry, however, is soon knocked out of you at the railway station, just underneath the white palace throned on high. Such a foul, bare, squalid barn my eyes never beheld ! It would disgrace the 'Black country;' and this in the capital of mighty Spain ! A dingy labyrinth of wooded sheds, tacked on to each other clumsily, and falling apart from sheer mouldiness and age ; ill-clad natives pouncing on bag and baggage, and leading me along rotten boards into an indescribably grimy outhouse to claim my boxes, which, as in Spain no one hurries himself, comes slowly from the van.

If you do not wish to have your possessions ransacked, you must fee a sour-faced official, who, with greedy eyes and wiry fingers, already grasps the cords. Quick, quick ! Out with your purse and settle it !

This is my first lesson in that system of bribery and peculation which, like an ugly canker, runs through the golden tissue of glorious Spain.

'If,' said a business man to me, who had lived here for twenty years, 'the Government only received 20 per cent. on the imposts, the national debt would be paid off in thirty years.'

A *peseta* or two settles the sour-faced official, and I pass out into a yard, all mud and slush in winter, and dust and flies in summer, carrying my own bags ; for the brown-faced natives on the platform cannot be troubled with such unremunerative trash, and await the serious luggage reposing upon the counter of the outhouse, there to remain until it is the good pleasure of some one, now smoking a cigarette in a corner, to issue the order for its release.

In Spain you must learn to wait. The first word I heard at Irun was *mañana* (to-morrow) in everybody's mouth. *Mañana, mañana ;* no use to hurry ; needless to reproach ; ridiculous to scold ; dangerous to swear. Time is made for

slaves. Now, your Spaniard may be poor, starving even, but he is no slave. Time is his property, and he will enforce his rights to it.

Floundering in the mud of the yard, I look round for some means of reaching the city behind the palace planted on the airy height, of which I have seen as yet only the snowy palace.

Not at all! I do not know Madrid. There are a couple of dirty omnibuses instantly filled inside and out with a still dirtier mob, which instantly drive off with mocking speed, and two or three fiacres duly pre-engaged. It is too far from the city, and the road too steep, and your Spanish driver too lazy to come down to the station at a venture; so if you are ignorant of the Cosas de Espana, and have not written beforehand to your hotel, or booked at the office of the *Central*, strive not against your fate. Take a tram (there is one in waiting outside the gate), or, putting forth your best leg, walk up the hill followed by any copper-coloured native you can catch, carrying your boxes on his head, not forgetting that at the city gate, under the steep ascent beside the station, another fee must be forthcoming.

N.B.—There is an appearance as of a great solitude of newly mortared walls falling into a premature decay, of arches spanning empty air, and gaping window-frames opening on void space—an effort for a new station. *They say* it will be soon finished. I shall believe it when it is done!

. . . . . .

The streets through which I pass are narrow and ill-paved. Some as steep as those of Rome, others opening quite vaguely to the sky—a trumpery rough-and-ready look about everything, as of houses built up in a hurry, and left standing by mistake, the fronts with no relation to each other, and each, as it were, at enmity with its neighbour. No aristocratic mansions; no artistic monuments—mean squares of all shapes, generally small, with a garden in the centre; a good statue here and there, and some fine fountains.

Bewildering bifurcations occur where four, five, and even six road-ways meet: tramways whistling up with appropriate confusion of passengers and vehicles. No shops to speak of—no display of any kind; a miserable pavement—every-

thing, in fact, absurdly unlike a great capital; yet with a glee, a *brio*, a joyousness in the keen air, a hum of happiness among the living stream flowing blackly on day and night—talking, laughing, ogling, smoking, singing—which makes Madrid at once the ugliest and most enchanting of cities.

There is your far-famed Madrileña—Mercedes, Milagros, Concepcion, or whatever be her name—as graceful as she is enticing. The *mutine* face and poetic undulations of the Andaluza, dreamy eyes from Malaga, the raven tresses of Moorish Granada, or the flaxen glories of native blondes, each tripping along her different way on the smallest of feet—the light folds of a black veil (not a mantilla) arranged coquettishly upon her glossy head—(the mantilla is quite out of date, and is only worn at the *corrida de toros* (bull fights), or at mass)—a gold pin or a rose planted just where it should be, and little love-locks dark upon her brow; the *caballeros*, sallow-faced and deep-eyed (just in proportion as the Spanish female is distractingly pretty the male is singularly common-place, not to say ugly; the keen air of Madrid—'tres meses invierno, nueve meses infierno' is the word—expands and calms the women, but shrivels and dries up the men), enshrouded in his heavy cloak, lined red, blue, or yellow, sometimes all three in stripes, and seldom put aside except in the dog-days; murillo-eyed children—ready-fingered little knaves—looking as if they had walked bodily out of the great master's frames, entangling themselves among trams, carriages, and mule carts; nurses in national costume carrying delicious little white bundles (I never saw such beauties as Spanish babies); business men, but few, hurrying along; pleasure men and those of no occupation dawdling or smoking under the awning of a café packed with guests, although it is but three o'clock and a glorious afternoon. What a crowd! What a noise! 'Agua! Agua! Quien quiere?' from broad-shouldered Galicians—at Seville it is served *warm* in winter, and always carried in an Eastern jar, posed on one shoulder, like Rebecca at the well. Then the newspapers: *Constitutional! Epoca! Progreso!* (there are as many papers as politicians) *Naranjas de Sevilla!*—cried by curly-headed urchins, as brown as Arabs; 'Abanicos! Abanicos!' from trolloping girls, paper fans in hand, going

through all the pantomime of its language; all screaming in different keys—all filling up the crowded streets along with the cheerfullest of beggars—a life, a go, a rush, an intenseness of doing something which is nothing, but does as well—on, on to the sun-dried Plaza of the Puerta del Sol, and the spacious thoroughfare of the Alcalà, ending abruptly in the broad greenery of the Prado.

. . . . . .

I naturally drive to my hotel—the 'Russia'—the only one in Madrid where one enjoys that excellent 'exposition of sleep' so appreciated by Bottom the weaver and by myself. As to the Hotel de Paris and de la Paz, both enormously dear, you might as well lodge in a manufactory. Madrid is at best a very noisy city, and there are moments in which, sitting in those far-famed establishments, you cannot hear yourself speak. Besides, the 'Russia' is a friendly establishment, where you are an individual, not a number.

So to rest and to dinner, of the details of which meal more anon.

. . . . . .

Close by is the Puerta del Sol, where the fevered pulse of Madrid beats its fastest, not magnificent or even handsome. Just a bare, irregular space, a fountain in the midst within a marble basin as big as a lake. Only one decorated building, the Ministerio de la Gobernacion, guarded by a picket of soldiers, fully armed, and ready prepared, day and night, to charge on a rebellious mob should occasion offer.

Cafés innumerable (the café is a great national institution, and in size and splendour puts all else into the shade; a park of artillery might exercise in the *salles*); three or four hotels; and every inch of spare wall covered with advertisements—plays, operas, *zarzuelas*, bull-fights, cock-fights, concerts and masquerades.

By a compromise of things old and new, the name of the Puerta, upon which old Sol first shot his rays, is retained ages after every trace of a *gate* has vanished. When the Inquisition lit its fires, and heretics were paraded like wild beasts through the streets, the Puerta del Sol was in the country. Now ten different openings admit ten different streets, discharging torrents of population; and upon the

pavement, as wide as an ordinary street, hangs a crowd, dense, black and tenacious.

At the Puerta you see everybody: knock up against a Minister of State; brush against a well-shaved *torero*, with his chignon of black hair, short jacket, and *majo* hat: tumble across an Ambassador or a match tray, or hitch yourself into the linen veil of a Sister of Charity, book in hand, coming from mass; jostle an *estudiante*, or a Castilian peasant in breeches, smelling of garlic, or face the domestic cook, his basket of provisions poised on his head.

By the verge of the great central basin, tramway after tramway rolls up, waits, whistles and departs (most excellent white-painted tramways, run by an English company, my benison to you! Without a word they land you at your will!) Grandees in elegant landaus roll by, followed by resplendent coffins—blue, pink and white, shrouded in flowers under black and gilt pavilions—followed by a train of chanting priests, a trombone, muffled in crape, giving the keynote; a donkey-cart, carrying a dying man to the hospital, his legs hanging out behind; bald-headed Castelar, the embodiment of Spanish eloquence, in a *fiacre*, as becomes the Republican chief *par excellence*—people call him *Mademoiselle* Castelar, because his was a maiden Ministry, and produced nothing! Pi Margal, the venerable Communist conspirator, spectacles on nose; Duque Fernan Nunez, the richest man in Spain; a sick child in a perambulator; Gayarre, the tenor, in his little brougham, and the Queen in an open carriage with her last new baby!

At the Puerta del Sol merchant meets merchant, politicians scheme and demagogues plot. Here *Pronunciamientos* are planned, seductive females make conquests, and the *jeunesse dorée* gamble. The Puerta is the place to look for a friend, to avoid an enemy, hide from a creditor, and rendezvous mistress or lover. If you are jealous, you can stab your rival there, or be in your turn yourself turned off by a blade: the crowd, like charity, covers all. You may not find a Jew, but there are plenty of bargainers; that glossy-haired maiden, for instance, with violet eyes, chaffering for the last half-hour about a gilt necklace.

'How much is this trumpery?' she asks, with a voice of disdain, dangling the beads.

'Ten reals.'

'Hombre! You are dreaming,' and she drops the trinket and moves on.

'Ai,' cries the vendor, rousing himself and following her, 'consider, *Niña*. It is cheap at fifty, but for the sake of the Santissima, whom you resemble, I offer it for less.' She shakes her head. 'Eheu, *that* tastes you not? How much *will* you offer?'

'*Caramba!* I am not here to bargain, that is your business. Three reals is my price. More is robbery.'

'Jesus! Maria! José! Sooner than sell at less than eight I would untile my head.'

To which the obstinate damsel sarcastically remarks, that although only the tenth hour, he is already drunk with wine.

Finally she gets the necklace at her price, and walks off.

There are priests with deep-set eyes which burn, and Don Basilios in shovel-hats and long cloaks; strong little Galicians with loads of wood; the Asturian nurse in her scarlet bodice; the sandal-footed Valencian, with embroideries and fans; the red-bonneted Catalan and the town-bred Matador.

Guitars twang at every corner, obese Andalusians sing *cachuchas*, beggars limp among the wheels, large-eyed lads seize on you to buy lottery tickets, and dark-skinned *Gitanas* waylay you to tell your fortune—all with a whirl, a din, a clatter of wheels, a babel of human tongues, day after day, month after month, year after year, summer and winter; a fever of pleasure, an agony of pain, a rage of movement—or the placid stillness of solemn death.

When night falls the *Sereno* takes up the wondrous tale, and keeps his watch from nine p.m. till six next morning. About eight o'clock he emerges all in black, a bull's-eye lantern strapped to his waist, a bunch of house keys by his side, and a long pole tipped with iron in his hand. Like Fate, he is always there, but all the same a friendly creature, your *sereno*. Before entering on his functions he is affable, and condescends to smile, gossip cosily at a street corner, smokes a cigarette before a wine-shop with a friend, or sits on a bench in silent contemplation of the stars, to the delight of the street *muchachos*, who regard the lantern at his waist as a species of terrestrial cômet. But as the clock strikes nine his solemnity becomes appalling; noiseless,

ghost-like, he glides upon his beat, whistles to his fellow *Serenos* at stated intervals, and meets them, a group of shadowy forms, at certain angles.

What sights that silent man sees under the moon! What secrets under shadowy balconies, in the tortuous alleys of the old town, and under the dark branches of the Prado! How many daggers has he beheld unsheathed, and billet-doux thrown out of windows! What bolts and bars have opened to his eyes! What shrouded forms hanging on to iron balconies! How many signal-lighted windows has he noted, counted the fall of lovers' footsteps, or the dull thud of the priests carrying extreme unction to the dying. Night has no secrets for the *Sereno*, the moonbeams no mystery. He carries the keys of all the houses in his beat; if you cannot get in he will unlock the door. He protects the weak and guards the lonely; arrests the arm of the midnight assassin, and is merciless with that spiked pole of his, and a revolver under his belt, to all brawlers, thieves, and evil-doers.

Call out '*Sereno!*' and a dark figure emerges, turns on his bull's-eye, and sounds his alarum. Scream or shout, and the whole fraternity will rush out, sounding a concert of whistles.

I love the *Sereno*—he is an honoured institution of the olden time, though he does murder sleep by singing out the hours in his grave monotonous voice. When I first heard him I could not conceive who was offering his wares for sale at two o'clock in the morning.

The *Sereno* is lost in the tumult of Madrid, but you should see him in the Moorish alleys of Seville, gliding like a shadow across marble *Patios*, and beside moonlit fountains; at Malaga, where nightly shrieks break the traveller's rest, or in the Alhambra, pacing solemnly upon the footsteps of the dead, down by the lonely gate of Picos, or the Torre de las Infantas, and turning up his bull's-eye perchance full on the ghost of King Boadbil, or a rendezvous between the 'Light of Dawn,' and an Abencerrage guardsman!

What midnight Spain would be without the *Sereno*, I shudder to contemplate.

CHAPTER II.

MADRID CONTINUED.—COSAS DI SPAGNA.

Spanish Cookery—The Dinner and the Company—Spanish Loquacity—Wine—The Language—Arabic Gutturals—Everything is *bueno*—Dialects—National Character—Spanish Pride and its Consequences—Every Spaniard a Gentleman—Instance of the Cripple—Domestic Tyranny—Intense Patriotism of all Classes.

PEOPLE who talk nonsense will tell you that Spaniards live upon honey and mushrooms, varied by acorns and snails.

For my part, I found the *cuisine* on the whole excellent.

'What!' I hear a voice exclaim; 'bad oil and garlic!' No, sir, or ma'am, as the case may be, I am desolated to contradict you; but truth obliges me. You must put all that by, along with Dr Sangrado, Figaro, and the immortal Don. It is true I have seen young artichokes served in oil as a salad; but oil, when good, is a holy condiment, as those who live in Italy well know—and how they despise lard and butter!

My first dinner at the 'Russia' was very abundant—one or two national dishes served with the rest; the *puchero* (I detest it!), a *bouilli*, composed of slices of bacon and sausages, the whole engulfed in a sea of cabbage and white beans—the sacred *garbanzos*, brought from Carthage, and later known as the Roman *cicer*, ennobled by the great name of Cicero. (The first time I tasted a *puchero*, taking the bacon for turnips, I got a slice into my mouth. Faugh! how to get it out again? It was a moment of agony!)

Afterwards we sailed on prosperously through roasts and boils, partaking of an excellent *ragout* of rice, flavoured with capsicums (*pimientos*), a sort of curry, evidently Arab, until fish arrived in the middle of the feast. Now, Spanish fish, whether coming from the Atlantic, Mediterranean, or a mud-pond, is simply execrable; but, *en revanche*, sweets are good, and the fruit splendid.

Up and down the table I played at bo-peep with my neighbours, through piles of oranges, pomegranates and grapes, as from the Promised Land; dried figs, cakes, and

pastry bring up the rear in quantities sufficient to rejoice the soul of an Etonian!

The dinner—yes; but for the company—hum, hum! Men puff cigarettes in my face, and my whole time is taken up; and I rise, quite hungry, from dogging the eye of an obnoxious traveller, who I know will speak to me. To what nation he belongs I cannot say—no recognised one, surely; and as his language is polyglot, you cannot get off by pretending not to understand.

Opposite, sat four of the Primrose family, accompanied by the Vicar of Wakefield, I should say—strayed to Spain by mistake in his peregrinations between 'the pink bed and the blue'—accompanied by Moses, married, and grown old and sad, but as simple as in his green-spectacles days, and another brother, not recorded by Goldsmith, each with their respective wives, so much alike that it must be perilous to connubial security, in hotel corridors with doors exactly similar. One wife, a sporting thing of fifty, evidently wants care. She has a butterfly in her cap, and roses at her waist, and gushes all over like a mountain brook. The elders watch her, especially the Vicar, at which she prims and tosses her airy head-dress, addressing the obnoxious Polyglot in an enticing way.

Excellent folks these, but not calculated to display the dignity of the British nation abroad. Some one has taken them to see the gypsy dances. They are shocked. 'Abandoned wretches!' says the young thing. 'How dare they?' What the husbands think does not appear. Perhaps the vision of those *gitanas'* little feet and laughing eyes is as a glimpse of Paradise to these sober men, *weighted with wives!* These good people 'see little in Spain,' at which the obnoxious Polyglot bites his lips, and puts up his napkin to conceal his mirth.

Next sits a noted beauty (now in the decadence), armed *cap-à-pie* for conquest in brocade, twirling a monstrous fan. One day she appeared at breakfast in a crimson robe, with a little Moorish cap and nodding coins, and astonished everyone so much no one could eat.

'Where is her husband?' asks the obnoxious Polyglot, in a stage-whisper of the Primrose family, at which the young thing of fifty blushes and winks.

But for all that he is sad hypocrite, for I know for certain that the wretch bribed the waiter to put his chair next to hers, and got snubbed for his pains. A Spanish judge is beside me, grave-eyed and staid, as criminal judges should be. Then come some nobles from Murcia; the father, a senator, swollen in the face and disgustingly ugly, which suggests the question, 'Why did that respectable woman, his wife—with all the world to choose from, for a husband, do her child'—a sympathetic brunette—'such a cruel wrong as to impose such a father on her?' His nose, for instance —which, like a dutiful daughter, she repeats upon her face.

Mentioning Spanish ladies, I find they are the most inveterate chatterboxes in the world, running over those terrible Arab gutturals, and long j's with a glibness quite distracting. Heavens! how they talk, rattling their words like dice!

Next, but not least, I must mention our Duke—for we have a veritable *Duque* at our table—Grande d'Espagne, a beardless boy, waiting to be married when his toothache is cured, and our deputy—for we have also a deputy (once a prefect)—a right cheerful man, who makes jokes through all the courses; also a journalist, always on the point of publishing a monster newspaper to which no one will subscribe —a brushed-up, bustling little fellow, eyeing other folks keenly, and laying down the law like Minos.

The rest of the table is filled up with a line of commonplace Spaniards, who only eat, drink smoke, and stare. Atrociously ugly, I should say: yet ugliness sometimes answers. 'I am the plainest man in Christendom,' said Wilkes, the politician; 'but I will undertake not to be behindhand one quarter of an hour with an Adonis.'

Our wine is the *Val de Peñas*—the same rich red liquor cut out of the sacks by Don Quixote for Moorish blood—served as *vin ordinaire*. According to the Spanish fashion, food, wine and lights are included in the price of the rooms, an arrangement which saves a world of trouble, and gives scope to a certain feeling of hospitality. Were I to mention to Señor Francisco Vives, manager of the 'Russia,' that I had not dined well, he would straightway raise such a storm in the region of the kitchen as would go far to out-do Jove's thunders.

. . . . . .

From the *cuisine* I pass by an easy transition to the language. I do not get on at all well with what Charles V. calls *the language of the gods*. After Italian there is no music in the sound. It may be a manly language, but it is too composite to be classic, composed, as it is, of two distinct roots—Arabic and Latin. As long as the phrase keeps to the Latin, nothing can be more sonorous; but then comes in some crack-jaw syllable with the Arab *j*, harsher to the ear than a rusty saw—not only Arab letters, but whole words, extremely difficult to pronounce, and horrible when spoken. To me it sounds like corrupt Italian, utterly lacking the sweetness of that amorous tongue, yet so much resembling it that, without knowing a word of Spanish, I can make myself understood in Italian everywhere. And the conjugation of the verbs, how difficult! The verb 'to be,' for instance, appears simply impossible. There is a certain form for a sense of movement, and another for a state of torpor. Now, I ask, how is all this to be compassed in rapid speech?

Next to the word *mañana* (to-morrow), which is the first you hear on entering Spain, and the last on quitting it, comes *bueno*. Everything is *bueno*. The afternoon sunset of winter, which bars the sky with gold, and a line of level plain, flat, and hard as wood. If a dress is admired, in which the most violent tints cry against each other, that is *bueno*. If the *brasero* gives an ardent heat, I say to my man Franciso, '*Bueno*;' at which he grins, and shows his teeth like a nigger. I praise my dinner with the same word—a mosaic on the superb incrustation of a Moorish wall, or a painted fan from Valencia. All is *bueno*, and, to be emphatic, add the Arab word *mucho*, and you secure applause!

Such as the language is, the Castillians speak it well, rolling out the syllables like Romans. At Madrid, Toledo, Burgos and Valladolid, the very populace express themselves with the correctness of printed books. The newspapers (their name is legion) are well and correctly written; and the Stage, all over Spain, even in *zarzuelas* and light comedy, is classically pure.

There are as many dialects in Spain as there were kingdoms—Basque in the north, Murcian in the south, Catalan at Barcelona, and Valencian in the east. As to the Moors

and Moriscoes of Granada and the south, they were so crushed out by the Philips, they have only left words. But the *haute langue* is the same everywhere: thus, a *bon-mot* at Pampeluna is equally appreciated as at Madrid; and the roughest student *parterre* of the Salamanca theatre is as eager to catch the attic salt of a naughty dialogue as are the men of Cadiz.

This unity of tongue argues well for the dynasty. I should like to hear in United Italy a Neapolitan imparting some delicate scandal in native patios to a Piedmontese; a Venetian, with his clipped vocabulary, inoculating a Genoese with his political faith; or a Roman arguing with a Savoyard. They could not do it. A Yorkshireman might as well talk in his jargon to a Gael, or a Welshman try to reason with a Frank.

And now from language to character. Spanish pride is proverbial. It has one good side, which results in every man thinking himself a gentleman.

You speak to your servant, to a shopman, to an artisan—as to an equal. Even a troublesome beggar is addressed as brother, and adjured in the name of God to remove himself out of the way; all, including the beggar, replying with equal courtesy and respect. People may draw knives and kill each other, but their language is polite; they only wrangle and call names in the Cortes. All this is so singular, so thoroughly national, I quite despair of making it comprehensible; it is the manner of a people who respect themselves, and by the action of this feeling impose respect on others. For instance, I call my carpenter, a handsome young fellow, who comes, lifting his *sombrero*, into my room, takes a seat uninvited, and lights his cigarette, while gravely discussing what he has to do—but that young fellow is the very pink of respectful politeness, and would no more be guilty of conscious familiarity or rudeness, than the first grandee of Spain.

With hotel-waiters, gentlemen laugh and talk as with equals, and are replied to in the same strain. In a shop you bargain with a due regard to the susceptibilities of the seller, who, when he has said his last word, stares at you if you insist further, and turns away.

To scold a servant is simply to expose yourself to ridicule

or insolence. You make an *observation*, you *express a desire*; if he does not comply, you part with dignity. One man left me because his feelings did not permit him to carry my shawl. According to his ideas, it was degradation. I ought to do it myself. His successor did carry it on occasions, but carefully buttoned it up within his coat.

A people who are calm and not given to talking are a people difficult to change. In the abundance of words comes action. Now, as the passions of a Spaniard are deep down and burning, I would recommend you to let them be. Once, quite by an accident arising out of my ignorance of the language, I *appeared* to accuse my servant of giving me insufficient change. I shall never forget his fury, and the nature of the observations he addressed to me. I found myself humbly apologising.

Now this sentiment of universal good-breeding (the humblest traveller will not open his provision basket on a railway without pressing you in the heartiest manner to partake) breeds also humanity, Just as St Paul would, from his precepts, be the best bred gentleman of his age, so your Spaniard is humane because he is well-bred.

In one of the Madrid trams (delightful carriages, low down, easy to reach, and running along so smoothly, with clever mules, round sharp corners, up inclines, and down steep hills) I found myself seated one day with every place filled. At the bottom of the Alcalà, just where the Prado crosses, we stopped, and a poor man appeared in ragged clothes, almost a beggar in fact, and was hoisted in. As he was on crutches this was difficult; but the guard helping him with the greatest care, and the bystanders assisting, the poor man at last took his stand on the little platform outside, poising himself as best he could with his crutch against the carriage. (Sitting inside, I saw all this through the open door.)

But not for long; an imperceptible look passed round the company, and a perfect dandy of an aide-de-camp, in the smart blue and silver uniform of a cavalry officer, rose, passed from his place on to the platform, and taking the poor man (who, on his side, accepted the attention with perfect composure) by the hand, conducted him to his own seat, and himself retired outside. Nor was this all. The

poor man (who was not well favoured or interesting at all), let him reduce himself as he would (and he, on his side, showed the most anxious desire to inconvenience no one), could not, burdened with his crutch and his lame leg, avoid taking up more space than was fairly assigned to him, beside two ladies. (I say *ladies*, emphatically, because all classes are represented in the trams. You may encounter a duchess, or your washerwoman.) Now, reasoning from experience, you would think that these fair ones might snuff, and toss, and turn up their nose at the intrusion. Not at all! You should have seen them. With the sweetest grace they accommodated themselves and their trimmings to the poor man's necessities, looking at him in the kindest way; an attention acknowledged by the raising of his threadbare hat with the air of an Hidalgo, and the nursing of his lame leg out of the ladies' way, until I expected to see him drop on the floor with cramp.

Now, I ask, in what other country would such a scene occur?

It is true that the Spaniard is obstinate as one of his own mules, and inflexible in anger. The Spanish husband may be indulgent from a deep-seated sense of chivalry, but a Spanish father is the tyrant of his own hearth—a mild tyranny as long as he is not opposed; but take a case to the contrary.

General X.'s daughter fell in love with her father's adjutant. There was no reason against the match, but General X. chose to refuse his consent, and the pair married without it. From that hour he ignored their existence. The son-in-law and father fought side by side gallantly in the Carlist war, but without recognition. The adjutant so distinguished himself that General X. was requested by friends to apply for his son-in-law's promotion.

'Son-in-law!' quoth that personage; 'I have none!'

'Your daughter's husband.'

'I have no daughter.'

'We meant Lieutenant ——, your late adjutant.'

'Ah, *otra cosa!* Lieutenant —— is a good officer. I will willingly assist his advancement.'

It is also true that the pride of the Spaniard blinds him

to the truth—that he thinks, or affects to think, his country is still the first in Europe, and passing with a flowing brush over the political insignificance into which Spain has fallen for centuries and is only now slowly recovering from, goes back in fancy to the glorious days when the red and yellow flag waved over two hemispheres, and her fleet ruled the world's seas.

And as to the history of the past, which is at the bottom of these hallucinations, everyone knows it. Not educated men merely, but the boy who cleans your shoes, the porter who carries your luggage, the peasant with his striped scarf who tills the ground, the water-carrier, the labourer in vine-yard and olive-ground, the swarthy *Torero* who fights the bull, the dark *Gitano* who plays the guitar, the peaceful *Sereno* who paces the silent street, the very beggar who bothers you for alms. Each and all raise their heads and their eyes glitter at the old names of yore, the Cid, King Jaime, Ferdinand, Isabel, Columbus, Pizarro, Cortes, Ximenes, and that incarnation of Spanish greatness, the Emperor Charles V. Not, mind you, as heroes of old tales, to be read of in chronicles, but as actual living men in whose renown and glory they themselves share.

The name of España is pronounced with the same solemn resonance as that of Rome. When speaking of his well-beloved land, a Spaniard will tolerate no criticism, and if for a moment he forgets himself so far as to affect to blame, he will at once recall or qualify his words, should you echo or add to them. Your praise he accepts by bushels, and if you would please, it were wise to lay it on freely. After all, it is but an innocent vanity, a pleasant craziness, as innoxious as that of the immortal Don who only wounded himself with windmills.

Caress his foibles and you will find your Spaniard charitable and charming. He does not exalt himself upon others' ruin, nor discuss European calamities (he is too proud for that) to compare them with his own. On the contrary, he is as willing to applaud as he would himself be praised Always with a reservation, unexpressed and perhaps hardly admitted even to himself, that the Spaniard is so immensely superior to all others, no comparison can possibly exist. But when he speaks of his country, he is insolent, over-

bearing, unreasoning. For Spain, he will sing hymns of triumph all day long—in parliament, in journals, in speeches, pamphlets, books—Spain, a people of heroes, the great nation, the glory of centuries, past, present, and to come!'

Such is the Spaniard. The last to learn, the first to forget; always beginning, never ending; taking no lesson from the past, despising the future; brave, indolent, frugal, honourable, vain, with a faith to remove mountains, but with a practice to let a molehill lie.

CHAPTER III.

MADRID CONTINUED.—THE CORTES.

The Cortes — The Deputies — Spanish Oratory — Moret—Prim—Sagasta—Castelar—Other Figures—Topete and Prince Amadeo —Anecdote of *Le Bon Dieu.*

THE Calle St Geronimo opens on the Salon de Prado. You stroll to it under the shade of bowery trees, by smiling gardens, past the statue of Cervantes—the palace of the Duque Medina Cœli—chief of the great house of la Cerda, now a child—and the dark opening of the Calle Turco, where Prim was treacherously shot. The Plaza de las Cortes is on your way, and you pause before the portico of the Congreso de los Diputados, a compact and regular edifice, approached by a broad flight of steps guarded by two bronze lions. If you look inside, you will see that members speak from their seats as in England, but without their hats, that the President sits at his desk in serious black like an undertaker—Republicans and Democrats to his left, and his particular friends and followers before him; and you will learn that the ministerial bench for the time being is designated as '*El banco Azul.*'

In the Cortes you see ranks of bald heads; baldness is universal. They live too fast, these Spanish legislators, and though most abstemious in the matter of meat and drink, otherwise light the candle at both ends, and whittle

in the middle. To the Chamber everyone goes tidy: those possessing beards and hair well combed and scented, and coats and trousers cut after *la mode illustrée*, each deputy with an air of agreeable cheerfulness belying the general conviction of his own political clique. None are such pessimists in politics as Spaniards. With their arrogant self-esteem and inflexible character this is remarkable. But public confidence has been so effectually shaken by centuries of misrule under the sway of incapable ministers and weak sovereigns—not to mention bloody civil wars, a greedy superstitious clergy, intriguing courtiers, and military dictators—that under the most prosperous conditions it will take a long time to restore it. Yet the individual Spaniard is generally *muy hombre de bien*, and if the Liberal Party continue to administer the country as they are doing, and the young King remains as now a strictly constitutional ruler, faith in themselves and in their country will return, and Spain once more become the rich and prosperous country nature has intended.

No one must imagine that the goodly show of deputies in the Chamber—as distinguished-looking a body as you will see anywhere—represents the nation. What they *do* represent is the Minister for the time being. Until he falls *he* is always in a majority; his prefects, alcaldes, and officials generally, changed at every fresh appointment, take care of *that*.

After all—*Che vale?*

The country must take care of itself. The Ministry may not probably remain in office long, and cannot be blamed for making the best of it.

Once in their places, the deputies cannot be accused of want of eloquence. Your Italian is not more fluent, your Frenchman more voluble, or your Englishman more impressive; their fault being a too great redundancy of words, and striving after *los raggios sublimes*—meaning what we call 'tall talk,' and laugh at.

Not business-like, these dear Spaniards. In debate they diverge, excursionise, and run races on various hobby-horses of anecdote, citations, similes, and *fioriture*, in a manner which would certainly get them hauled up at Westminster — the whole embellished by the gestures of a people

at once the most graceful, and the most solemn in the world.

All this is very well on ordinary occasions; but when a stormy debate comes on, you should see them! The President's bell, to which no one attends, peals loudly. Each man rises up in his place, shouts, cries, and gesticulates. The shock of battle is from stem to stern. Torrents of words rush through the flood-gates of speech, and the weapons of war are sharp-pointed and mortal!

Everyone wants to speak; each man seeks to drown his adversary's voice in the swelling note of his own—and the Spanish organ is rich and sonorous.

'You are a Carlist!' thunders one on this side; 'A Communist!' roars another on that. The Right charges the Left, guerilla fashion, strikes when it can, retreats and advances; the Left return the onslaught with wild volleys of vocal artillery. 'Liar!' 'Atheist!' 'Jesuit!' Demagogue!' are terms freely bandied. To hear them, you would imagine that the whole Cortes was about to fall on each other bodily.

Not at all! This verbose violence means nothing at all, and rarely produces a duel. When Don Antonio, Duc de Montpensier, shot his first cousin, Don Enrique de Bourbon, it was so extraordinary a proceeding, he was more applauded than for anything else he had ever done.

Take, for instance, the ardent Moret y Prendergast—the *enfant gâté* of the Liberals, the favourite orator of the day—seeking to reconcile the Republic with the Crown, in a party he calls 'Monarchic Democratic.' He is six feet high, with a noble presence, clear-cut expressive features, and refined manners. When he has belaboured his adversaries to his heart's content, and received their various compliments in return, he throws down no gauntlet of defiance, but only rushes out, hot and panting, to explode his passion amongst his friends in harmless fireworks upon the steps. Moret, now in the Ministry, has been in England. He is the very Chrysostom of political eloquence. Honey flows from his lips. I heard him once speak at Seville, and though too far off to distinguish well, his rounded sentences fell like cadences of music upon the ear.

Nor did the great Prim—that Cromwell without a throne—ever lose his temper, but stood erect in his place, slowly

moving his eyeglass in his gloved hand, as he turned from side to side with a colourless, impassive countenance, as he uttered powerful words full of a soldier's bluntness, his voice ringing out like a war clarion through the crowded galleries.

Prim's titles were many — Marquis de los Castillejos, Conde de Reus, etc.—but to the day of his death no one ever called him anything but Prim, or Juan Prim, indifferently. You have heard of Narvarez, too, but who would recognise him in the Duque de Valencia? or the once Regent Serrano as the Duque de la Torre? There is something infinitely grand in this utter absence of snobbism in a nation. The late Prime Minister, Sagasta — and a very capable one he was, and calculated to maintain the power of the Left for many a day—is there, with a dark, wrinkled face, a square, massive head, with small bright eyes. Vigorous and energetic in speech, aggressive and skilful in retort, Sagasta has the gift of exciting the most languid of sittings. Posada Herrara, the present Prime Minister, is the *bel esprit* of the Liberals. He was Minister of the Interior for five years in Queen Isabella's time under O'Donnel. An inveterate punster—by his wit and *bonhomie* he can throw oil on the troubled waters of debate.

The great leader of the Conservatives, Canovas del Castillo (six years Premier after the accession of the young King), sits in his place on the other side—calm, smooth, and passionless to outward eye, at once the most refined and able of statesmen, as renowned as a financier as he was adroit as a pacificator.

Now, who would believe that that stout, red-faced, burly man to the left is Castelar—once the Republican Adonis—oval-cheeked, poetic, with classic eyebrows, broad forehead, straight nose, and glossy locks? About his eloquence all men agree. Volumes have been written in his praise, adjectives exhausted in his honour—after the exaggerated manner of this people. There really is something supernatural in his oratory—a torrent in fluency, a furnace in brilliancy, a flood of passionate conviction which sweeps away all opposition. To hear him, his periods seem to move like a majestic march, and his words to be chosen like no other man's. He has the keenness of a Toledo blade in debate, the elaboration of a Plato in rhetoric and

antithesis, and the rapid rush of inspiration in peroration —altogether, a transcendent orator, by turns fiery, withering, electric, tender, humane, touching.

As a politician, Castelar's day is done — he has little political influence; but as a classic he is always listened to. Now, as of yore—the despair of reporters, the scourge of opponents, a statesman gifted with a memory which retains all facts, and a brain steeped in all history.

To the calm English mind, his action is too melodramatic and redundant. The man talks from head to foot, declaims rather; a Demosthenes since the age of sixteen, gifted by nature, and with no need for sea-side winds or pebbles; and, glory be to his personal rectitude! Though once President of Spain, and ever leader of his party, he lives in a third-floor, in a far-off boulevard, and is actually dependent on his salary as Professor of History for his livelihood!

Figueras, called the Spanish Neckar, is a tall, large-framed man, a fine lawyer and ready debater, and more respected by the Monarchists than any other Republican. Pi Margal, beside him, is a hoarse, howling conspirator, spite of his sedate aspect, square spectacles, calm, mathematical face, and eyes lighted by hidden fires. Rosas, the learned orator, is an iron-grey man; and old Admiral Topete, once a power, and brave and magnanimous, is now almost forgotten. Yet it was this nautical Don Quixote who opened the floodgates of the Revolution; and when the strains of the Revolutionary Hymn of Riego, forbidden by the Government, rang from the deck of his flagship, the *Saragossa*, at Cadiz, Isabella had virtually ceased to reign.

Prim was marvellously secret and skilful in his conspiring, and good luck favoured him.

He and Serrano, Duque de la Torre, the most powerful subject at this moment in Spain, were present, and joined Topete, both arriving the same night at Cadiz from different places of exile, the blue-jackets siding with their Admiral and with them.

It was a most dramatic episode. Topete left the Cabinet when Amadeo, whom he detested as a foreigner and interloper, was chosen King by Prim; but, for all that, when poor Juan fell, assassinated in the dark Calle Turco, the *very day* that Amadeo landed at Barcelona, this chivalric

old salt—*because he was a stranger*—waived all political animosity, and, in his Admiral's galley, rowed out to meet the young King.

At sight of him, Victor Emanuel's son started (Topete was his declared enemy), and a look of doubt and suspicion spread over his youthful face, which suddenly striking upon the sense of the gallant Admiral, he bowed low, and, with true Castilian dignity, assured him 'that, under the painful circumstances of Prim's death, his' (Amadeo's) 'life was now more precious to him than his own;' and so frank, bluff, and honest did he look, that Amadeo never for a moment doubted him. You must come to Spain for such types!

Topete is the only politician in Spain who favours the Duke of Montpensier. Don Anton's personal propriety suits his moral sense and conservative convictions. He (Topete) never was a minister, though fated to head a great national movement, and go in body and soul against Queen Isabella. In the course of a long life, Topete has never changed. He will accept neither favours, decorations, office, nor pension; but, even with his puritanical steadfastness of purpose, one must believe that he has by this time renounced the Montpensier candidature.

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May I be allowed at his point to illustrate the national view of the Government by introducing a little history? It is rather profane; but, as I did not invent it, I am not answerable for that—at all events, it is pertinent to the Parliament, and gives the measure of men's minds.

One day the *bon Dieu*, as the French say, rose in a good humour as to creation in general, and especially so as to this earthly planet. So He called together the patron saint of each country, in order to confer some favour upon each.

First appeared St George, glistening in silver armour, feathers, helmet, dragon and lance complete, and stands before Him.

'What do you desire for your land?' asks *le bon Dieu*. 'Speak! it is possible I may grant it.'

'I want,' replied St George reverently, uncovering and displaying a mane of golden hair, amazing to behold, 'the finest navy in the world.'

'Granted,' says the *bon Dieu;* upon which St George, replacing his helmet, collects his *mise-en-scène* and retires.

Next comes St Louis, eldest son of the Church, and of undoubted sanctity.

'What do you ask for *la belle France?*' is the question; upon which St Louis, kneeling—which fiery St George forgot to do—answers: 'The bravest army that ever marched to battle.'

'Granted,' is the reply; upon which exit St Louis, to make way for St Joseph, patron of Italy, who, in reply to the same question, expresses—with the courtesy proper to his nation—his wish to possess 'the Empire of Art.'

St Andrew asks for Scotland corn, being a cold, poor country; St Patrick, for Ireland, that no poisonous serpent or reptile should ever trouble the soil.

'Granted, granted,' cries the *bon Dieu*, dismissing the whole army of martyrs with a nod. But suddenly looking round and observing that one guardian saint is missing. 'Where,' He demands, 'is that lazy Spaniard St James? What a fellow that is! always putting off everything to *mañana*' (to-morrow). 'Where is Santiago?'

Suddenly a great noise is heard of horse's hoofs clattering through the courts of heaven, for St James, being always late, invariably travels on horseback—and the patron of Spain gallops in.

'What does my good St James want?' asks the *bon Dieu*, smiling at the haste with which the saint precipitates himself from his saddle, and hastens towards the throne.

'I desire,' cries St James, prostrating himself on the clouds (for, of course, all this takes place in heaven, and St James is the most devoted of all the patron saints which rule over Europe), 'for my beloved Spain that we should be the wittiest of nations.'

'Granted.'

'And,' adds St James, seeing that the *bon Dieu* is in the best of tempers, 'that our women should be the most beautiful.'

'Hum, hum! Too much for one nation; nevertheless, for your sake, Santiago, who are such a good and pious knight, I will say *granted* for wit and beauty.' Upon which St James, rising, and making a series of the most profound

obeisances, was just about to depart, when he suddenly stopped and turned round: 'I forgot to say, I also wanted to ask for the best Government.'

'Now this is too much!' exclaimed the *bon Dieu*, exasperated at his urgency. 'To all the other saints I have only granted one wish; you have already two. To punish you, I declare that Spain shall never have any Government at all!'

CHAPTER IV.

MADRID CONTINUED.—THE PRADO.

The Prado and its Surroundings—The Young King—Birthday *Fêtes*—The Retiro—The King once more—Anniversary of the Dos de Mayo.

FROM the Plaza de los Cortes I descend into the Prado, a broad, open space, tree-avenued, gravelled and bordered with kiosks, pavilions, tents, booths, *cafés* and dancing-halls—Neptune at one end with trident and attendant sea-gods, bestriding a vast basin, and Cybele, driving her chariot among the powers of the earth, at the other.

This is the *Salon del Prado*, an open-air ballroom, backed by the dark woods of the Retiro, the Prado generally, being that leafy barrier which runs round Madrid, giving to it a lightness and freshness unsurpassed. Call it Recoletos, Fuente Castellana, or Calle d'Atocha, it is all Prado; not one alley but many, a central roadway for carriages, ditto for horsemen, several for walkers and loungers—divided by box hedges, sheltered *bosquets*, tree groups, and flower borders.

That graceful white building, rising out of scented groves like a coy nymph seeking seclusion, is the Ministry of War. A brand new church poises itself in front on the summit of a rise, a circus beside it, quite independent, turned the other way; a railed-in enclosure, shaded by cypresses, surrounding a monumental obelisk, and mourning statues hung with the freshest garlands, is the Dos de Mayo (of which more anon); a brilliant Saracenic villa peeps out of shrubs, and a long low building, half-pavilion, half-palace, buried in

trees, is no other than the far-famed picture gallery, unique in the history of art.

Most of the best houses are in this woodland quarter; the palaces of the Dukes of Lerma, Sesto, Baylen, Elva, the house of Marshal Serrano, Duque de la Torre, the Embassy of France, barracks, restaurants, theatres, the Royal Mint, and the Plaza de Toros.

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It was in the Prado I first saw him, the bright young King, his youthful Queen beside him—an Austrian princess, cousin to the Emperor. He has black curling hair, fine dark eyes, a gracious smile, and the sweetest manners in the world. He is only twenty-five, as brave as the Cid Campeador, and as polished as a knight-errant; but the Spaniards are not a loyal nation. Yet he is so young, so bonnie, with such taking ways; so little of a king, yet all the while so royal—laughing, chatting, as I see him, now here, now there, chaffing the stately *grande maitresse*, whispering into the ear of his young Queen, joking with his elder sister, the grave Princess Isabel—light, gay, *insouciant*, loyal,—the very picture of 'Prince Charming.'

To-day is his birthday, a public holiday, the whole city streaming through the Puerto del Sol and the Alcalà. The shops all shut, and a double service of trams and omnibuses running from point to point. The sun is shining as fiercely as it can, the crystal fountains glistening, the green leaves dancing, the white walls twinkling. On, on, the people go. Every face turned one way. On, on, a human inundation. Where will it end? Old, young, and middle-aged, all bound to the Prado.

Bouillotte mammas leading youthful daughters lovely as Hebes (there are but two ages in Spain, the too-ample matron, and the childish *doncellita*); decorous-faced papas, flower in buttonhole, intrigue in the cut of their coats, mystery in every feature. Tall collegians in short jackets, slips of flower-girls weaving in and out among the crowd like lissome creepers, town gallants gaping after them, a crabbed ancient or two watching from behind; young priests in short *soutanes;* oily *Padres* in flowing robes; *Guardias civiles*, iron featured, in dark blue and red uniforms, with cocked-hats, after the manner of the Opéra Comique; busy officials

strutting along, cigarette in mouth, bigger in their own esteem than all the world beside;—on by tables of sweet-drinks, hissing charcoal caldrons where the *buñolero* dips in the dough and out it comes fritters; by mountains of oranges, piles of dark-skinned pomegranates, tinsel Madonnas in silver shrines; beggars squatting on the ground clinking iron cups; bands of *Estudiantes* singing choruses under the trees; gamblers, with dirty packs of cards, sprawling on benches; a hurdygurdy turned by a Cuban girl with eyes as big as saucers; a monkey performing antics on a dog's back, rope-dancers on stilts, guitars strumming to stamping feet a *seguidilla* or a *bolero*, Arab-featured *Gitanas* twirling tambourines, and the clink of wine cups;—a heat as of the *infierno*, a babel of noise, an avalanche of dust, a kaleidoscope of colour, fading into the golden splendours of the southern sky.

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I am so tired of looking that, once arrived at the Retiro, I sink into a chair, to be instantly recalled to life by a loud voice demanding two *perros* (pence). Who cares!

The trees in the Retiro are old, ivy-wreathed and far-stretching. There are dusky thickets, radiant parterres, umbrageous lawns, fair woodlands as of an untouched wilderness, a lake, murmuring streams, cottages, hermitages in rock, mysteries in yew and cypress, wide-arched *berceaux*, where the birds sing freely: carriageways wide enough for ten to go abreast, silent forest-paths for hushed footsteps, vistas of statues, an Italian garden, a jewel of the royal past; and an avenue of great Wellingtonias, half a mile long. Once the Retiro had a gallery of pictures, built as a royal retreat for Philip IV., and a theatre, where the light pieces of Lopes de Vega were enacted; but both were burned down, in company with many priceless Titians and Velasquez. Ferdinand VI. rebuilt the palace, but, being possibly of Republican proclivities, it got itself damaged by the French, and was finally demolished.

Since the Revolution of 1868 and the Republic, the landmarks of royalty have been removed, and the Retiro thrown open to the public.

The Duke of Fernan Nuñez has laid out the grounds anew, and following good counsel, has formed a magnificent drive from end to end, terminating in a mighty terrace which

overlooks the church of the Atocha and the stern Castilian plains.

Who cares? Certainly not the crowd invading every nook —the little paths full, the lake streaming with painted barques and miniature steamers. The echo of music is in the woods, and the faint rattle of castanets comes from the vineyards.

Again I see Prince Charming driving the Queen in a high phæton, a mere boy, yet King of Spain, Toledo, Aragon and Leon, Prince of the Asturias, Caliph of Granada, Cordoba and Seville, and Jeffe of Jaen and Malaga, like Boabdil. He has left the Prado and is here. No foreigner like Amadeo, nor political president or military tribune—but the true-born master of the land, bringing with him constitutional freedom and wise reform.

If the King falls—and may God preserve him !—the kingdom falls with him. Then will come ruin, State bankruptcy, anarchy and chaos; a military tyranny which grinds, or a red republic which bleeds.

Who cares? say this *insouciant* people. One birthday is as good as another, and there will always be *fiestas!*

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From a birthday *fête* I turn to a festival of a very different order, which I witnessed on another day.

I have already alluded to the obelisk of the Dos de Mayo in the Prado. It is a pity that such a spot should have been chosen for the burial-place of the heroes it commemorates. Cypress-wreathed monuments and sepulchral crosses but ill-befit that joyous locality.

It fell out in this wise. Murat, who in his heart aspired to the throne of Spain, entered Madrid as a friend, but being ill-received by the populace (the Spanish mob, more variable even than that of Paris, always speaks its mind), the glorified creature, all gold-lace, curls and plumes, got furious, seized upon hundreds of men, women and priests promiscuously, tried them at sham court-martials, and shot them down red-handed in the streets. Three officers of artillery, Jacinto Ruiz, Louis Daoiz, and Pedro Velarde, alone refusing to fire upon them, were instantly cut down as rebels.

Now, it is the names of these heroic Three which are specially venerated, and it is their profiles which figure on the commemorative obelisk I have mentioned in the Prado.

You should see Goya's picture of the massacre in the museum! A sombre sky, the glare from darkened lanterns, pools of blood, gaping wounds, masses of corpses, horsemen without horses, and horses stretched on the ground in their last agony! What forms! What gestures! You hear the shrieks, shudder at the groans, tremble at the blood. It covers the ground, it flows onwards, it touches you!

While the massacre was going on in the capital, the Alcalde of Mostoles, a little village just outside the walls (a rustic John of Procida—national disasters often call forth such men), assembling his village gossips in the market-place, the carpenters, blacksmiths, masons and labourers of the place, unfurled the flag of Spain (red, on a gold ground), and solemnly standing upon a wine-barrel, declared war against France. Nor was this mere bravado. To give his words effect, the Alcalde of Mostoles sent out messengers to all the great cities throughout the length and breadth of the peninsula, and these were his words:—'Arise all people! Our brothers are dying in Madrid; shot down like dogs. Kill the stranger before he murders us! Arise! Be doing!' At this news the country rose to a man. In a few days the report reached England; the Duke, who was under orders for South America, was ordered to land at Santigo Bay to assist the Spanish. Joseph Bonaparte was expelled, and the great Peninsular War begun.

To-day is the anniversary of the *fête* of *Espanolismo;* the incarnation of Spanish hatred to the *Estranjeros*, riven into recollections of the terrible war of independence which drove out a French king and brought in a native despot! What matters! He was of Spanish blood, and national choice is no man's business.

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At daybreak salvoes of artillery awake the sleeping city, the bells of every church toll, and every altar offers expiatory sacrifice (especially solemn in the Church of San Isidro, where in a trench lie buried the remains of hundreds of the murdered victims). Trumpeters with black streamers and military bands playing doleful airs parade the streets, and a glitter of helmets and swords, state carriages, squadrons of dragoons and aides-de-camp, flit about like meteors. Before twelve o'clock every window is dressed with tapestry

crape, and funereal garlands, every balcony crammed to overflowing, and the streets abutting on the Alcalà and the Prado flooded with humanity.

I was fortunate in being placed at a window in the house of my beautiful friend, Madame C— (next to the Empress Eugénie, the most bewitching blonde in Spain), not only one window, but the entire front of her house (Moorish fashion), latticed with windows, where I had an excellent view of the procession.

First rode regiments of cavalry, the brilliant sunshine blazing upon silver trimmings and light blue uniforms; then the poor of all the asylums, and such sick from the hospitals as could walk, ranged two and two; the students of all the colleges, and the military and naval pensioners, some on crutches, assisted by friends, others hobbling along on sticks, a few even carried, and all as decrepid and feeble as veterans should be. The mob greet these with frenzied acclamations, and are with difficulty restrained from bearing them onwards bodily in their arms.

To the pensioners succeed invalided officers, invested for the occasion in the torn and blood-stained uniforms worn in battle, while over their heads wave the blood-stained flags which led them to victory. What seemed to me a little army followed (Madrid is not a loyal capital, therefore it is full of barracks, and the barracks accumulate round the palace with cannons ready pointed to sweep the streets in case of need), closed by the dignified presence of five Marshals of Spain on horseback, a mass of gold-lace, embroidery, and snowy plumes.

I cannot particularise all the names mentioned by my fair friend, but you may be sure Serrano was conspicuous, stately, haughty, grave, bearing the aspect of a man who, as Regent, once carried the future of his country in his hand.

Next followed the Senators and Deputies, a sombre phalanx, with faces hardened in the immobility of national reserve. Then, amid a glittering crowd of Captains, Generals, Jefeo, alcaldes, and prefects, appears the young King, bareheaded, his bright young face composed to an aspect of official woe. The Syndic of Madrid, the governor, staff, officers and ministers of State hedge him in (assassination has been so frequent, and human life of so little ac-

count, that this is a loyal precaution not without danger), followed by the regiment of the Royal Guards, a noble-looking corps, so resplendent that I instantly forget all else, and stamp them on my memory as a species of military peacock.

It need not be said that the Prado is full. That it always is about five o'clock; but now the very trees are laden with humanity, and the flat house-tops black with spectators. Thousands of rich equipages jostle omnibuses, gigs, and carts drawn by the indefatigable donkey; equestrians congregate in the alleys, and the mounted peasants display their gaudy accoutrements.

There are avenues of flags with funereal inscriptions, lists of the dead patriots' names nailed to the tree trunks, black-bordered newspapers hawked about, woodcuts of Goya's picture of the massacre, portraits of the three heroes, of Murat as the foul fiend, garlands, crucifixes, lighted tapers, statuettes *in memoriam*, toys, and even cakes adorned with crape.

The King, still bareheaded, his merry eyes downcast, arrived at the foot of the obelisk, that grandest of all religious functions, a military mass, commences to the boom of cannon, the rattle of minute-guns, the muffled roll of drums, and the shrill braying of clarions and trumpets.

Yet amid this patriotic tribute to the slain, I looked in vain for some memory of the rustic Alcalde of Mostoles, who from his obscure village struck the first note of vengeance. No sign! no emblem! Alas, even in death a grateful country is partial.

CHAPTER V.

OLD MADRID.

Dingy Shops—A Rag Fair—Casa de Lujanes—The Market—The Plaza Mayor—Historic Memories—An *Auto-de-fé* and a Bull-fight in the Good Old Times—An Old Spectacle revived—The Plaza at Christmas-tide—Carnival—Burial of the Sardine—The Magi will come next year—Lent.

THE old streets of Madrid are very dingy, as with a sham old age. Bordered by colonnades, flat and heavy, they run

down whole districts—mean little shops underneath, filled with striped sashes (*fajas*), flannels, red, blue, and dingy yellow—an eastern colour much affected by the Spaniards—guitars for all purses; fans by the hundred; articles like mushrooms (which I am told are castanets); and the most gaudy book-boxes of all sizes, covered with tinsel and gold lace, and accommodated with a lock and key, which I find are *coffins*.

In the Calle Toledo you may still see a broad sombrero of the ancient pattern—the round hat of Navarre, the pointed cap of Biscay, the bonnet of the Bearnais, such as Henry IV. wore, and threadbare *capas;* the square-cut vest is there, the silver buttons of the peasants of Castile, and the long cloak of the Asturian.

Locks, kettles, dolls, cotton stuffs from Barcelona, daggers and knives from Albacete, lie on the pavement; patient donkeys stand with paniers full of cabbages and oranges, bricks for building, and even timber. You are tempted with cigarettes at street corners, and water-melons and oranges are present to allay thirst.

Behind is the *rastro* (rag-fair), the Arab *soke*, where everything is spread out in the same primitive manner on the stones. 'I would advise you not to venture into the crowd,' says my companion and friend, the chaplain of our Embassy. 'It is picturesque and polite; but you may return more laden with animal life than you go in.'

I pass a small square, with a long low palace, sloping roofs, and pointed towers, in the worst French style of the seventeenth century, belonging to the Duke of Osuna, and pause before the small mediæval frontage and square castellated tower, many stories high, of the Casa de Lujanes, where Francis I. lodged when brought to Madrid a prisoner after Pavia. Here he received the visit of his conqueror, Charles V., who (after the Spanish fashion), entirely putting himself 'a la disposicion de su Magestad,' refused him necessary air and exercise, and almost killed him.

The market, built by an Englishman, a palace of glass and iron, is worth looking at; also an old building, near the British Embassy, in which the Mexican Princes were confined, a subterranean passage underneath the street leading into another building, belonging to the Inquisition, where they were tortured to discover hidden treasure.

In the pleasant square of the Plaza de Oriente, opposite the palace, I and my companion admire the matchless grace of an equestrian statue of Philip IV., and pull up finally under the ample colonnades of the Plaza Mayor, the only historic square in Madrid—neither large nor imposing, the roofs flat, and ponderous arcades running round, supporting heavy tiers of balconies following each different storey. As a slight relief to the general monotony, the central façade is uniform on the four sides, and fronted into the semblance of a palace, with towers domed in the Moorish style. At each corner a lofty archway leads into the adjacent streets; and in the centre, an innocent-looking garden, with a fountain, surrounds a heavy but artistic statue of Philip III.

In the old time, this Plaza was the site for pageants, processions, bull-fights, and *autos-de-fé*, the condemned standing within the area of the innocent-looking garden, the flat roofs —still guarded with iron bars—black with spectators.

Seated under the umbrageous trees, the delight of children and beggars, I conjure up a vision of Spanish kings: Philip III., for instance, weak son of a despotic father, whom he passed his life in imitating without his brains. No longer presenting himself as a clumsy statue on a pedestal over our head, but in flesh and blood, royally apparelled, appallingly solemn in aspect, as he reclines on a low *estrade*, roofed in with tapestry; the open windows of the Panaderia behind his back (thus the southern façade was called) giving evidence of rich saloons within, painted in fresco by Coëllo Donozo; gilded walls, wrought in devices and arabesques; columns of porphyry and precious marbles, and silver chairs of state surmounted by escutcheons—the castle (Castile), the lion (Leon), and the barred shield of Aragon (the bars drawn by the bloody finger of King Jaime across a golden shield after his victory against the Moors), the conjugal *nudo* of Ferdinard and Isabella, and their bundle of knotted sticks.

By Philip's side sits his Queen, Margaret of Styria, a fat, harmless creature, whom he adores in secret, but is ashamed to show—a motley mass of black farthingale, paniers and curls; her Camarera Mayor, the Duchess of Gandia, of the old house of Lucrezia Borgia, by her side.

All are profoundly indifferent to what is going on below, as also is the terrible Sandoval, Duke of Lerma—of stolid countenance, the Wolsey of that day, the real monarch of Spain, scarcely deigning to reply to the questions his royal master addresses to him, as to the names of the wretched victims covered with painted flames (this Philip is not *cruel* by nature, like his father, and only loves the *auto-de-fé* as a sportsman loves game), but his father assiduously attended these *fiestas*, so does he.

In a large picture in the Museo of Madrid by Rizi, which all strangers know, the whole scene is depicted as it passed before Charles II. and his Queen, Marie Louise of Orleans, the sister of La Grande Mademoiselle, with the various episodes of this sad drama.

The bigot King, imitating *his* father, as Philip III. mimicked his, looks on with stony eyes from his magnificent *estrade*, his gay French Queen and amply proportioned mother, Mariana of Austria, by his side—the grandees and grandezas, all in black, vaguely staring, as if the painted victims were but *pantocini* moving in a show.

On a high throne sits the Grand Inquisitor, a clerical Radamanthus incapable of mercy. Before him crowd the condemned to hear their sentence—such as hold firm in their faith, while the others—the apostates, less courageous, adjure their belief before an altar. All wear the pointed Sanbenito cap and close-fitting garments, on which are represented flames. Horrible pictures of those who have previously suffered, adorned with much fire and brimstone, are paraded round, a monk in a low pulpit is preaching, and a priest in full vestments celebrates mass for the repose of their souls.

Under the black disguise of *Familiar*, many a grandee glides about, proud to do the bidding of the Inquisition. Alguazils stand in the foreground on horseback, waiting along with the mules, on which the victims are to be carried without the city. Courtiers group before the royal *estrade* in costumes of the latest novelty, in Chinese and Italian silk; trumpeters with scarlet tabards stand ready, and glittering heralds and men-at-arms.

In the general crowd are Hidalgos, carrying Toledo rapiers, draped in short velvet mantles; gaily apparelled

pages with dainty caps among country nobles in antique coats, thick with embroidery and pearls; royal guards in resplendent uniforms, and wealthy burghers of Madrid in sober broad-cloth; merchants from Murcia; silk mercers from Almeria; dealers from Granada; leather factors from Cordovo (which, though Christian, still bears the impression of Moorish Art); bankers from Barcelona, corn and wine dealers from Seville and Jerez, armourers from Toledo (all these of the *bourgeoisie* in sober-coloured doublet and trunk hose); their linen and lace from Holland and Milan, alone costly, but in reality they are much more wealthy than the many coloured nobles, with fortunes impaired by the extravagance of the court, and the monstrous expenses of entertaining the King; grave lawyers in flowing mantles and fur caps; rough-riders in short cloaks and lombard hats; halberdiers with long lances; lackeys and porters, and here and there a brown-robed Franciscan, or a Dominican in a black and white robe; the mob crowding in from under the colonnade, with those immoveable faces proper to the land. They did not burn in the Plaza Mayor. There the Inquisition took solemn leave of the condemned, and handed them over to the civil power in the shape of mounted Alguazils and guards, who, setting them on the mules, purposely sorry beasts chosen for the occasion, their faces turned to the tails, bore them through the streets to the lighted stakes without the gate.

One of the most thrilling orations ever pronounced by the great Castelar in the Cortes, was on the finding of a long black lock of woman's hair embedded in the soil of a mound, used for the purpose of burning heretics outside the Gate of Recletos, excavated to form a new line of streets.

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In this same Plaza Mayor, among the courtly throng, sat our own 'Baby Charles,' invited to witness a bull-fight by his desired brother-in-law, Philip IV., when he ran away to Spain for love of the Infanta, accompanied by Steenie (we know that Charles was lodged at Madrid in the Casa de las Siete Chimeneas, still to be seen in the old town). Not sitting beside his love, the Infanta—a fat fair blonde, aged seventeen, with melting blue eyes, arched eyebrows, and oval face, as we see her in her picture in the Museum—

(forbid it all ye powers of punctilious Duenas and Camareras Mayors of that day, which in their wisdom decreed that the Queen of Spain had no legs!)—but near at hand, with a light cane balustrade between them, permitting of a limited conversation between a lover who speaks no Spanish and a loved one who speaks nothing else.

Embarrassing as was his position, Charles—at all ages eminently handsome, indeed posterity judges him mainly by the abundance of his silky curls, soft dark eyes, fine open brow, and that high-bred look of a gentleman *pur sang* —made at last the best of it. While the bull overturns horses and *picadores*, Charles tries to catch the Infanta's eye, and to heave a deep-sounding sigh; when the *banderilleros* plant arrows in the bull's neck, and every head is turned the other way, he ventures to pluck her robe, which being of white brocade with buckram, and heavy with strings of pearls, she is unconscious of—a fact rather encouraging to him than otherwise. But boldest of all, at the supreme moment when the *espadas* advances alone to face the bull and flaunts the scarlet drapery before his eyes, and the King and Queen are absorbed, and the Camarera Mayor entranced, he manages to touch her hand, and actually to whisper words of love into her ear, at which she starts and blushes.

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Nor was the death of heretics and bulls the last pastime celebrated in the Plaza Mayor.

The English chaplain recalled to me that when handsome Ferdinand VII., four times married without an heir, found himself father of a daughter (to become Isabel Segunda, the present ex-Queen of Spain) born to him by his last marriage with the bewitching Christina of Naples—he invited all Spain to a bull-fight in this Plaza, he himself and Christina sitting within the same *estrade* before the same palace, the Panaderia, used by Philip and Charles, the whole spectacle remodelled on the antique pattern; only on this august occasion, instead of mere vulgar *picadores* and *matadores* attacking the bull, and dancing *rigodones* on horseback, it was nobles of ancient lineage, mounted on splendid stallions, who performed the feat.

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Again at Christmas-eve the Plaza Mayor, used as a market, grows merry as the season; swarms of protesting turkeys cackle on the stones, driven by bare-legged boys with long canes; ducks and pigeons are carried on donkeys' backs; seething masses of oranges, dates, and brown suits carpet the ground, and preserves of quince and apricot scent the keen air. Butchers offer Castilian mutton, sausages, or Estramadura hams. There are cheeses from Murcia, pig-skins of wine from Valid Penãs, and dried figs and olives everywhere.

Around a troop a throng harmless and joyous: a tambourine is riches; a guitar followed by a crowd; song and dance are in every corner; beggars jubilant with a *perrochico* (halfpenny); wood-carriers (*gallegos*) leaping without their load; *los niños*, bent on mischief, scurrying in all directions; *los pobres* cooking at charcoal stoves a frugal *puchero;* an Andalusian footing a *fandago* to a wild 'la, la, la,' with friendly accompaniment of hand-clapping; mothers with babies chorusing:—

'The Virgin is in travail,
At twelve the babe will squeak.

A cripple propped up against a pillar, chanting—

'We are ruled by thieves and robbers,
But what is that to us.

A noisy band of *Estudiantes*, with flying capes, and cocked hats turned up with a fork, roaring out—

'Let's drink and be merry,
And love our very fill.'

A troop of *criadas* (servant girls) in cotton gowns, singing in shrill voices, while their large eyes travel round,—

'A man may be gay, and a man may be old,
But a pretty maiden knows what to behold.'

Later, when it does come, it is a real carnival. Everything is turned topsy-turvy in the old square; duchesses

addressed as '*tu*,' by walnut-skinned vagrants, who leap up behind the carriage and whisper secrets in their ears; *caballeros* affecting poetic worship in the style of the old Romanceros; a grandee disguised as a chimney-sweep, a diplomatist as a canary bird, a shopman aping the seductive airs of Don Juan, and hotel waiters crowned, and with a tinsel sceptre.

On Ash Wednesday the mystic Sardine is buried in a coloured coffin, gaily gilded, with much pomp by the mob, on the banks of the waterless Manzanares, under the shadow of the white palace. No one knows what the burial of the Sardine means, but it is done all the same, just as on Twelfth night the same mob go quite wildly to the eastern gate of Madrid to meet the Magi, who naturally not appearing, they rush to another gate, repeating to each other, 'Have patience!' 'They have lost their way!' 'They will appear!' At last, no traces of the eastern kings being visible on the horizon, they return home, the comfortable assurance passed round, 'that they will turn up next year for certain!'

Then Lent comes with penitential processions passing through the Plazas; sacred dramas at the theatres, like those of Ammergau; sepulchres blazing with lights, and bearing the most dismally painted figures, as large as life, erected at street-corners; and on Holy Thursday, the King and Queen, uncovered, and in full evening costume—young Christina, her crown upon her head, and wearing her best diamonds, with a train many yards long trailing behind: Alfonzo in uniform, covered with orders, his plumed hat in his hand—followed by the Infantas—the stern-faced Princess Isabel and her sister, the fair girl Eulalie, in white brocade—parading the principal streets, carefully laid with sand, to visit the seven churches.

The whole court comes after them, attired in everything they possess most gaudy, followed by a collection of quaint sedan chairs, which have belonged to different defunct sovereigns, lest the Queen or the Infantas should be tired.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ESCORIAL.

The Station Asleep—A Weird Landscape—First View of the Escorial—How it was Built—Exterior—Sala de las Batallas—Philip's Private Rooms—Cell where He died—The Church—Monuments of Charles and Philip—The Choir—Library—Sepulchral Chamber of the Spanish Kings—The Osario—Don Carlos and His Fate.

I HAVE spent a long day at the Escorial. I am woefully disappointed. It is as a *dies non;* but I dare not for my life insinuate such an opinion to my Spanish friends, or they would never pardon me. To them the Escorial is the eighth wonder of the world—a Leviathan of architecture, a miracle of art—and woe betide the strangers who begrudge its praise!

Although the distance is but eight leagues from Madrid, you must rise betimes to catch the train, always ingeniously contrived to inconvenience the traveller. I was astir at five. No one ever calls you, or tells you the hour, or knows it, or anything else here. You must find out everything for yourself, and the sooner you do so the better you will fare.

A reward to the *concierge* of the hotel—perfectly good-natured, but utterly vague—insured me a *fiacre* at the door before the wheels rolled in the Calle, and with many shakes and bumps I proceeded along the rough pavement to the station.

Here all was in absolute repose; one porter smoking against a doorpost; another stretching his arms as a man just awoke from a refreshing slumber. Neither took the slightest notice of me.

Not so three old women, huddled in a corner in rags, with a plaster head of Christ in a handkerchief which they displayed to me as a *cosa muy sagrada*, and some peasants and children rolled in striped blankets, sleeping soundly on a bench.

Overhead, on a hill, loomed a frightful barrack—*red;* opposite, on another hill, the beautiful palace—*white;* little akin to look at, palace and barrack, though very closely drawn together in time of need. The white palace would

not be there but for the barracks, nor the barracks without the palace.

Now come rolling down from the city rough omnibuses drawn by mules, and seedy *fiacres* filled with still seedier passengers, all wrapped in stripped blankets like the peasants, who have woke up, and are eating their breakfast of bread and garlic, and drinking wine out of a pig-skin.

At last, from out of one of the carriages jumps my Quaker friend, with his pale, serious face, good for business or pleasure; long-legged Arthur, with blue, inexperienced eyes, and ardent Mr W—, with a wondering mind.

We crawl through the same grim wilderness I had passed in coming to Madrid; by massive moss-grown rocks, and granite boulders, flung about as if by Cyclops trying a game of bowls with Titans. A wild, weird scene, broken by patches of juniper and yew in the crevices; in front, stretches of boundless corn plains (you cannot call them fields—they have no hedge, and melt vaguely into clouds), and interminable vistas, along long mountain ranges tipped with snow—all on such a mighty scale, we seem lifted above the habitable globe, and looking upon the amplitudes of a colossal planet unknown to man.

No sign of human footsteps—not a road, no trees; but here and there olives, pressed together for company; and beyond, great land-waves of various hues, majestic as the sea on a calm day with billowy rollers.

The Friend remarks, looking out of a window, that he can understand how such deserts got into Don Quixote's brain and drove him mad.

Yes, on such a background any adventure is possible; windmills turned into giants, gnome, banshee, ghoul, or sea-king; the vague northern shadows of the Niebelungen, or fell forms of the Erinnys, a dragon such as Perseus slew, or the hydra cut down by Hercules, pythons crawling over mystic rocks, or genii on the mountain tops invoking clouds.

Suddenly, half way up a jagged mountain side, an enormous grey pile of granite rises, a rock itself, save for the details of bare walls and endless rows of small windows, like barbicans in a fortress—pale, neutral tinted in front a precipice behind. This is the Escorial, a monument of commonplace in heroic surroundings. Philip must have tried hard

to make it what it is in the midst of such majestic solitudes.

With the dull bare pile full in view, we fall to talking of its origin, which the Friend has read up (W— quite ignorant, contradicting him at every word). Our Quaker, who is a preacher and discourses fluently, without noticing his remarks, lays down authoritatively that 'Philip *did* make a vow to St Lawrence on the battlefield of St Quentin, when he fought against the French, to build a church in his honour if victorious;' and he founds his opinion on a document in the handwriting of the period, in which 'El Voto de S.M.' is particularly referred to. The victory, too, was gained on the Saint's anniversary, and a sanctuary bearing his name destroyed during the battle.

But these were not Philip's only motives. Charles V., dying at Juste, an obscure monastery in the Estramaduras, directed in his will that a suitable monument should be provided for him by his son. Now, the Escorial was erected as Charles' mausoleum. (It was Philip's silly son who formed the idea of attaching to it the royal Pantheon.) A monument to his father was Philip's dominant idea, to which he added a monastery magnificent enough to proclaim his piety to the admiring world, and a palace for himself, where, like his father, he could live under the sacred shadow of the cross.

This particular site must have struck Philip in his progresses to and fro from Segovia: a grand amphitheatre encompassed by stern cliffs, wind-swept and healthy, with abundant springs; the rocky quarries close at hand of excellent stone of a sad granite tint.

The thin and stunted vegetation and the eeriness of the place would recommend itself to Philip's cheerless mind. The distance, too, from Madrid was convenient.

Before the foundations of the Escorial were laid, the religious order was selected, destined to assist him with their prayers. Of course he chose the Geronimite friars, who had attended upon Charles.

This done, the work went cheerily; the Sierra swarmed with life; the ground was covered with tents and huts, and the busy hum of labourers heard around speaking the various dialects of the many provinces of Spain, mixed with the

keen breezes of the mountain, the shriek of the rock eagles, and the rush of melted streams.

Twenty-one years passed before the Escorial was finished. The first architect died and was succeeded by Herrera; but the real constructor was the sovereign himself.

At the little station four rearing horses drag us up-hill in an omnibus to a straggling village, and set us down at the door of a *fonda*, which would not be bad if the people were less insolent. But seeing that the travelling public of Europe must perforce knock here, they profit by their position. Ardent W—, greatly excited, was restrained with difficulty from impressing his opinion of the charges on the landlord's person; as it was, he swore at him lustily in English, which the other affected not to hear.

Across the road frowns the gloomy pile of the Escorial (I say gloomy from the sense of its dreariness; otherwise, the aspect is painfully modern). At the four angles rise four square towers with pointed steeple, representing the legs of the supposed gridiron on which St Lawrence was burnt, inverted—the church and the palace, projecting on one side, the handle—and the internal courts and cloisters, running at right angles, the intersecting bars. There is no use in affecting to deny this arrangement; no architect would have hit on such a plan without a purpose.

And now we plunge into the dim whiteness of courts and granite cloisters. It is all Escorial. Where the village ends or the palace begins or melts into the rocks, I cannot say. Not a building at all, but the reflex of Philip's mind; the index to his reign—dark, sombre, brooding. To this day Philip lives in his work; his breath is in the air; his heavy tread echoes in the wide passages. A sudden light comes to you as from a magic mirror, when you behold him as the architect of the Escorial. You can understand what manner of man he was, this tyrant of the Netherlands, this butcher of the Indians and the Morisos, the oppressor of the Jews, the King of torture, stake, and axe, a sovereign arrogating to himself the justice of God without His mercy, the punishment of a sinful world bereft of salvation.

After wandering about on damp pavements, rank weeds sprouting between stones, and under walls upheaving like grim precipices—we were somewhat relieved by being con-

ducted into the palace proper, hung with tapestry from vulgar designs of Goya, and filled with clocks belonging to Charles V. (to keep them going with precision was the amusement and the impossibility of his later life). Then, through a gallery or covered cloister (as each internal court, and they are numberless, as marking the bars of the gridiron, has its cloister, and each court is three stories high, the actual living-rooms are reduced to a minimum); one hall called La Sala de las Batallas, decorated with quaint mediæval frescoes, representing the Moorish wars of Ferdinand and Isabel, in the Vega of Granada, the whole filled in with minute episodes (like Memmi and Giotto in the Campo Santo of Pisa) of armed knights with closely sitting armour, facing turbaned infidels in loose robes—crescents and Christian escutcheons on flags and banners, the Prophet's green pennon with its mystic sign, the castle and lion, the emblems of Spain; horses prancing under vine trellises; crossbows flying between trees; the turreted walls of the Alhambra running up-hill at the Albaycin, and down-hill at the Carrero di Darro; knights escalading towers, visors down; Moorish maids waving hands out of horse-shoe windows; a captive hanging on to a saddle-bow; al fresco meals under palm trees, and a renegade Christian kissing a veiled Moslem in the shade.

I wished to have had more time to study these curious frescoes. Besides the wars of the Moors, there is the whole plan of the battle of St. Quentin, and of the naval engagement at Lepanto. But the whole party, including the Friend, sternly protesting, he specially excusing himself to me as being 'a governor of men,' and used to command —I obeyed. So we turned into a couple of white-washed chambers with vaulted ceilings and porcelain wainscot, King Philip's private rooms.

Amazing in their cheerfulness: the windows turned full south, overlooking pleasant sun-swept terraces, divided by fountains and box-hedges, fashioned into the outlines of the arms of Spain; a boundless horizon beyond, framing the setting sun.

In these rooms Philip worked with his secretaries, received ministers and ambassadors from all lands, arranged *autos-de-fé* with the Holy Office, signed executions, authorised secret

assassinations, and approved the destruction of prostrate races; every now and then retiring into the church to say his prayers or meditate with folded hands before his father's image upon the altar, as the death masses for his soul rose to his ear.

Here is the armchair on which he sat, of embossed leather, much worn, and two small stools for his heavy gouty legs to rest upon. His writing-table is plain ash-wood, 'from which,' as the Friend said, 'though as plain as a kitchen-dresser, he tormented all the sovereigns of Europe, and boasted that with two inches of paper he ruled the world.' Heavy shelves over it for the arrangement of his papers, and a large green-velvet blotting-book, much thumbed and blotted.

Through a low door in the thickness of the wall we pass into a little dark cell, close upon the steps of the high altar, stone-paved, and wholly without light, except such as steals in between ranges of burnished pillars. Here Philip died—his head so turned as that his closing eyes could catch the bronze effigy of his father, the same crucifix Charles clasped in death in his hand; and wearing the same penitential robe, the same prayers chanted over him out of the same mass-book—after fifty-two days of intolerable agony, his living body consumed by worms; a lingering death, more horrible than anything he had invented for friends or foes. In that long torture what recollections troubled his weary soul? The massacres in Flanders, and of the harmless peasants of Portugal? The assassination of Egmont, Montigny, or Orange? The destruction of whole tribes of Indians, the Catholics of England invited to murder and the stake? The Genoese despoiled, the Jews burned? The sins of his voluptuous youth? The Princess Eboli and his other loves? His enmity to his brother Don Juan, so much better than himself? Or the death of his son, Don Carlos?

Not at all! As the flesh dropped from his bones, and death gathered round in untold horrors, he would, if he could, have bidden the fires of the Inquisition still to blaze, and pointed out fresh people for destruction.

'Better not reign at all,' were his words, 'than be king over heretics.'

No man knew his thoughts during those days, or why, turning his imploring eyes on his confessor, he whispered

'My father, my sins are so heavy, I will do anything, sign anything, decree anything—so that you save my soul!'

. . . . . .

Yet, such as he was, Spaniards cherish his memory, although his reign arrested the civilisation of Europe, and brought a curse upon Spain, for his crimes were but the exaggeration of Españolismo, his bigotry piety, his despotism law.

Again we dive into endless cloisters, painted in bad frescoes, up a stupendous marble stair to the royal entrance —out into a court to see a sculptured doorway, through which Spanish kings enter but once upright—at their accession: the second time carried feet foremost upon their bier; and so into the church, to me the culmination of the hideousness of the whole pile.

Cold, plain, sombre, of that composite architecture requiring all the aid decorative art can lavish—that church figures to me the baldness of its creator's mind. I allow that the proportions are fine, and the high altar impressive, as it terraces upwards in tiers of bronze and gold to a dome bearing a statue of Christ, so elevated as to be removed from all possible worship, as His spirit was banished from the religion which bore His name.

Upon the steps of the altar, where the Host lies exposed day and night, and constant lamps are burning, a little on one side, and partly concealed by colossal ranges of glittering columns, rise two bronze groups, life-size, kneeling in all the majesty of deathlike calm. On one side, Charles V., in costly enamelled robes, glowing with the reflex of gems—the escutcheons of the many kingdoms he ruled traced upon the seams—his much loved wife, Eleanor of Portugal, and his mother, Juana la Loca, herself Queen of Spain, beside him, their jewelled crowns laid lowly on the ground. On the opposite side, in another group, Philip (directly over the dark cell in which he died), also in regal robes, bordered with coats-of-arms, Don Carlos beside him, and his other son, and successor, Philip III.—*and his four Queens*, a kind of royal harem, striking a discord in presence of the dead.

Perhaps the architect felt this, for the Queens are thrown back into the extremest shadow, and the sons stand out.

Oh, littleness in life, and falseness even in death! Here

in this solemn temple, in face of his dead father and in presence of his God, Philip still plays the hypocrite he was in life, Mary Tudor beside him, whose heart he broke, Elizabeth of Valois, whom he blasted by a foul scandal, and Don Carlos at his right hand, whom he slew.

Magnificent as are the monuments, and awe-inspiring the scene, I turn with disgust from such a mockery. It is not for me to point the finger of scorn, but in all the annals of history I know of but one other death recorded resembling *his*, and that is Herod's!

Over the entrance on a high gallery is the choir, with double ranges of stalls, and in a corner, beside a secret door, Philip's seat, where, during mass, letters and messengers were slipped into his hands unseen by the monks. The only time that Philip forgot his *morgue* was in the company of the Geronimite fathers. When with them he would sit on the same bench with a beggar, and tolerate a screen of old and tattered stuff through which the congregation stared.

It is the fashion to speak of Philip as of an artistic mind. That is not possible, standing within the Escorial. I do not blame Herrera, the architect, but himself, a tyrant in art as in all else.

To me, the only artistic thing in the whole vast pile is the library, a gallery of exceeding richness, painted and decorated by an Italian. In a moment of preoccupation Philip probably left him to himself, and the result is, you breathe, and the eye sweeps round enchanted with the unwonted charm of colour and of form.

But not for long. The gloomy Spanish creator catches you up again at the door, through which, rather tired and greatly bewildered, after being marshalled about for three hours, we descend a double flight of steps to the Pantheon, the sepulchral chamber of the Kings of Spain.

'Take care,' cries the Friend, 'these steps of green and yellow jasper are as slippery as ice. I suppose that you would not be compensated, Arthur, by the fact that in breaking your head against the bronze door at the bottom you are just under the grand altar, and would share in the miracle of the Host?'

'By Jove! no;' cries Arthur, executing an ominous glissade as we enter the Pantheon. 'But for the name of the thing, this is as like a decorated grotto at Cremorne at

anything I ever saw. Look at that fantastic chandelier in the middle. Is it not like a dancing-hall? What a notion for a royal vault!'

'I believe we all agreed with W—.

The Pantheon is an octagonal chamber, lined from floor to roof with dark marble sarcophagi exactly alike, the name of each sovereign, with the dates of birth and death, engraved outside in large gold letters.

Here repose the bones of Charles V., Philip II., III., IV., and such queens as have borne heirs to the crown of Spain; none other are admitted. It is not an impressive sight. Nor does the place smell sweet. Nor is it pleasant to think of the mouldering carcases within their biers.

(Philip II. is not answerable for this absurdity. He designed the whole Escorial as one vast tomb-house for his father.)

Don Juan of Austria, Don Carlos, son of Philip, and a host of queens, not mothers of kings, and of infantas by birth or marriage, are delegated pell-mell into the Pudridero, where they moulder in company with such sovereigns as are placed there *temporarily*, 'to be manufactured,' as the guide genteelly calls it, until they are fit to lie in the sepulchral grotto.

And now a strange anecdote anent this place. One of the mysteries of history is the fate of Don Carlos. Poetry and the drama have dealt with it alike. He is pictured by turns as hero, patriot, scamp, seducer, philosopher, reformer; a chimera, a myth, incapable of reducing to shape or knowledge. Philip, his father, is accused as the author of his death, defended as an outraged parent, against whose life he plotted, and extolled as a martyr, who spared not his own son when that son was accused of heresy.

That Don Carlos died in prison, and suddenly, is conceded; but so many excellent reasons are given why he did die, history is undecided how it came about. He was of a frail and feeble constitution, say some; broken-heartedly in love with his stepmother, Elizabeth of Valois, affirm others; oppressed by fever, contends a third. Besides, it is said he courted death. He drenched himself and his chamber with cold water, had pans of ice put into his bed, and walked for hours knee-deep in slush. (The Venetian Ambassador endorses these stories, and the Papal Nuncio also.)

Then he was such a glutton; a pastry of four partridges was as nothing to him, and he would drink three gallons of liquid at a time.

But the *scandalum magnatum* was reached when Don Carlos, questioned as to the nature of his supposed offence against the Holy Office, displayed a profound indifference, and even laughed! After this, details of a dreary scene of death-bed repentance, pathetically touched by the Nuncio's pious pen—Don Carlos, sending for his confessor, devoutly avows his sins, and shows such a longing for heaven, that one would say that from that hour God had received his soul. Finally, with a holy taper in one hand, and feebly beating his breast with the other, without a groan he died!

Now, would you believe that all these are absolute lies? That Nuncio and Ambassador either invented them, or were themselves deceived. Here in the Pudridero is the proof of it.

When Emilio Castelar was President of the Republic, being as curious as an historian as he is eloquent as a patriot, he determined with his own eyes to ascertain the real manner of Don Carlos' death. So, in company with Don Joaquim, he went to the Escorial, ordered the door of the Pudridero to be unlocked and the lid of Don Carlos' coffin to be lifted, and there beheld his *decapitated* head beside the trunk! This was related to me by Don Joaquim himself. So much for history!

CHAPTER VII.

MADRID CONTINUED.

The Museum of Pictures—The Armeria.

THE gallery of pictures on the Prado lies in a garden buried among trees—a long low-fronted pavilion of red brick with white pillars, cornices and facings, partaking of that Sylvan style which characterises all the buildings of this charming out-of-door city.

I had heard of it ever since I knew what art meant; I never hoped to behold it, and lo! I am here.

I feel that it is an epoch in my life; and as my foot passes the threshold, my heart beats so audibly I fancy that the doorkeeper must hear it.

From the entrance-hall a few steps bring me to the basement storey, all pictures, on, through long corridors, without an inch of wall visible, up the grand staircase, a rainbow of colour, into other corridors, through a domed saloon of the French school, Poussin, Duguet, Claude Lorraine, Mignard, Greuze; then a heavy door swings in my hand; I raise a thick curtain, and I am gazing down the great hall—by this time so excited that I am fain to sit down on a bench and collect myself.

(A word in your ear: when you hear that this is the finest gallery in the world, *believe it.* The power and tyranny of the House of Austria made it so. The period of Spanish greatness was the period of art meridian in Italy. Every Spanish artist of note went there to breathe the classic atmosphere; and from these peregrinations arose the schools of Valencia, Toledo, Seville, and Madrid. Milan, Naples and Sicily were then Spanish possessions; the New World also, and that meant the world's bank. Charles V. and Philip were great patrons of art, and their *fainéant* successors, who in all else lost prestige and power, stuck to their artistic traditions. The royal collectors aimed at the highest goal; no *necessary* men at all. Not even such rank and file as Perugino and Bonifazio.)

Just flanking the door near which I sit, hang two full-length female portraits of Allori, the Bolognese Titian, full of the unconscious idealism of real life, because the Italians themselves are ideal. That such women lived at all comes to one as mythical as the existence of a Cleopatra or a Helen. Yet the Fornarina was but a flower-woman, and Andrea del Sarto's Virgin an unfaithful bakeress, to be met with any day under a Florentine portico, or drawing water from a Byzantine well. Next hangs a fair-haired queen, with plaited locks, Eleanor of Portugal, the adored wife of Charles V., and mother of Philip; a serene and placid countenance, and in her eyes the far-off look of one destined to die young. In her hand Eleanor holds a book, from which she lifts sad eyes; her

robe is a rich brocade of crimson, and ropes of pearls and gems coil round her throat.

No one can say the Flagellation of Michael Angelo, which hangs near (one of his rare easel pictures) is not a fine work. But it is harsh and sombre with tormented limbs. Then my eye ranges down a long vista of *chefs-d'œuvres:* Murillo, Andrea del Sarto, Titian, Raphael, Coreggio, Dominichino, Ribera (Lo Spagnoletto, pupil of Raphael, and founder of the Valencian school), Vandyke, the Spanish Juanes, Caon, Goya, Coëllo, Velasquez, and Morales, called the Divine.

All the horrid dwarfs of Velasquez—beggars, Zoppi, and Æsops—do not please me; neither his Menippus, his cobbler, nor his Don Sebastian, clever though that is in its look of imbecile obstinacy. (All these pictures are almost invisible from the number of copyists hard at work in reproduction.) Silently I level an anathema at his Nino and his spiteful laughing Bobo. Such works degrade art. Neither can I like his famous picture of the Meninas, which hangs opposite; where Velasquez represents himself as standing at an easel in the foreground, wearing on his breast the red cross of Santiago, painted in by the King's own hand, 'to finish,' as he said, 'the picture;' Philip IV. and his Queen seen behind as reflected in a mirror, and the little Princess Marguerite and her two maids of honour (Meninas) well in front. To me they appear a family of monsters, not at all requiring the presence of two hideous dwarfs to make them revolting.

To judge of Velasquez you must look at his baby Don Baltazar, on a fat Flemish pony, which positively leaps from the frame; his noble portrait of Don Carlos, son of Philip III., *l'homme aux gants*, a perfect example of colour; the equestrian portrait of Marianna of Austria, where the genius of the artist asserts itself amid extravagances of hoop, jewels, and ugliness; the Infanta Maria, Queen of Hungary, the same lady to whom our Baby Charles made mute love in the Plaza Mayor, and his *chef-d'œuvre*, the Borrachos, a marvellously conceived group of rustic topers ennobled into gods, all the more subtly dramatic because apparently undesigned; the young peasant in the centre, in a buff dress, holding the bowl and crowned as by chance with a vine branch—Bacchus—a miracle of colour, before whom a mythical toper kneels; while ivy and verdant festoons, cunningly disposed, meta-

morphose a bald-headed peasant into a Silenus, and other common-place drunkards into the classical forms of faun and satyr. But in this famous picture the realism is overdone; the toothless mouth of one figure disgusts, the bald head of another repels, nor can the potency of the colouring, nor the vivacity of the grouping, redeem what is essentially a vulgar subject.

These are, however, but details. Velasquez is a great artist. With a master-hand he can portray court or camp, street, tavern and gambling-house; kings, queens and princess, warriors and martyrs, dullards and wise men, dwarfs and heroes. His figures speak and move, whether on horseback, in the battlefield, beside the altar, carousing, or, as in the 'Weavers,' turning wheels for tapestry—or limping, deformed, obese:—all types that rest in the memory, even against one's will. Not as Velasquez at all, but Nature stamped upon canvas in all her moods.

Had Velasquez not been what he is, his backgrounds alone would have won him immortality. How fine is that one in the picture of Philip III.—the scene by the sea-shore: a cool sunny beach, with a mystic light upon cloud and sea, a grey stretch of rippling water in the front, and low cirrus clouds behind; the King on a magnificent white horse, with mane and tail like broken waterfalls. A fresh sea-breeze blows over the canvas—a brilliant bit of colour electrifies a scarf—the King's eyes fix themselves upon you, the red-lipped mouth speaks. Handsomer at least this Philip than his successor, who is represented under all possible circumstances, in every attitude: on foot, on horseback, in armour, shooting—actually at his prayers!

Is it possible that Velasquez was not weary of painting that vacant countenance of the fourth Philip, with its silly smirk, dull complexion, red eyes, and enormous mouth? Or could he feel grateful to this royal patron, unable to sleep without a friar at hand for fear of the devil?

Coëllo's Don Carlos, in the great gallery, is a pretty, thin-faced lad, with clear cut eyes like his mother's, and a high forehead, belying all his father's dismal accusations of disloyalty and vice. His dainty velvet cap is poised on one side jauntily, as a young prince should wear it, and a golden vest and purple-lined cloak become him well.

His father, grim Philip II., is beside him, at the age of sixty, a rosary in his hand, a high pot-hat on his head, and wearing a closely setting black vest, upon which rests the insignia of the Golden Fleece, his sole decoration. A flaccid, hard-eyed monarch, with livid lips and icy glance—more monk than king, less ruler than judge; his complexion, scarcely human in its intense pallor, marking him as already a prey to the nauseous decay which seized upon him ere he reached the grave.

What a contrast is that portrait of him by Titian in his golden youth hanging near the Borracho—a slight, elegant stripling, with a polished smile, curling auburn hair, and delicately moulded chin! How gracefully his inlaid suit of gold and silver armour sets upon him, and with what a martial grace he stands beside a table on which rests his thickly plumed helmet! Thus Mary loved him in her bridal hour, and he passed lightly by!

Nor is there anything finer or more real in art than Antonio More's portrait near by of this same Queen, Bloody Mary, as painted by order of Charles V. before her marriage. The Tudor's whole history is written on her face: pinched, crabbed, soured, her father's small-set obstinate eyes, and a thin-lipped mouth, closed to all reasoning. And the costume, too, how admirably suggestive! Nothing loose or flowing, graceful or feminine, but a black brocaded robe and jewelled stomacher, clinging to her like her skin; a white collar and Holbein jewel close to the neck, and a red carnation in her hand to signify her passion. I could gaze for hours at that marvellous portrait.

Returning to the great hall, I see Philip II.'s pretty daughter, by Coëllo, with a jewelled head-dress as a girl—better known in history as the mature matron called Isabel Clara Eugenia, wise Governess of the Netherlands, more loved and trusted by her father than anyone beside.

Coëllo might be styled 'the Spanish Rubens,' but with a difference. How Coëllo painted I do not know, but I feel that Rubens dashed in his touches with 'a fine frenzy rolling,' and that it was the redundancy and luxuriance of his genius which made him coarse. Hurry as he might, nothing could come up to the call of his fancy. Rubens lived eighteen months in Madrid as ambassador from the

English Court to Philip IV. As in London Charles I. had created him a knight, so in Madrid every kind of honour awaited him.

Nowhere is his would-be son-in-law, Vandyke, better seen than here—on the staircase is his well-known portrait of our Charles I., the profile taken in three different points of view; also a fine portrait of the Earl of Bristol in clear silvery tones. Then I jump off to one of the noblest of modern pictures, Rosale's 'Death of Isabel the Catholic,' a veiled figure lying on a state bed in a mediæval room in the palace of Medina del Campo, dictating her will to a white-robed monk, while Ferdinand sits behind a curtain bowed down with grief. Thus art ennobles history! In reality, Ferdinand did not grieve at all. Within one month, 'one little month, ere yet his shoes were old,' that sorrowing husband wedded a youthful beauty called Germaine de Foix, niece of the King of France, and by so doing scandalised all Spain.

Ribera (Spagnoletto), sombre and heavy, and of a savage turn of mind, is far too frequent all over the gallery. A kind of debased Michael Angelo, who studied Tintoretto and Bonifazio, exaggerating their faults; a painter of bigots, inquisitors, and gaols, with a contempt of the beautiful which brands him with a curse.

One of his pictures is the replica of the other: the same black shadows and yellow lights on extenuated saints and bald-headed martyrs, upon whose bodies one can count the bones. No speculation in their deep-set eyes, no life in their exaggerated wrinkles, hands of skin and bone—livid carcases scantily wrapped in rags, escaping from the bier or the hospital, and bearing the impress of the death throes.

Zurbaran, named by Philip IV. 'Painter of the King, and King of Painters,' curiously enough is much more scantily represented here than at Dresden. One picture, Saint Casilda, away in a far room—in a blue robe, fringed, red-sleeved, and narrow-scarfed, turning the roses she carries in her hand into bread—shines out as clear as a transparency. Looking at her as she stands, a queen, humble, yet regal, I feel that Zurbaran approaches nearer the pure ideal of art than any other Spaniard.

To my mind, all the Raphaels in this collection are at least *coloured* by Giulio Romano, not one genuine, neither

'Lo Spasimo di Sicilia' nor 'La Perla.' The Romano's muddy tints and swarthy skins, as unlike the ethereal tints of the divine master as night from morn. The 'Spasimo' is a grand picture, painted probably on Ralphael's outlines. As this canvas floated some time on the sea from an accident in its passage from Genoa to Sicily, it is difficult to pronounce a judgment. As to 'La Perla,' so called by Philip IV. as the gem of his collection, it is interesting as having belonged to our Charles I., and been sold by Puritan Barebones, after his execution, to Philip. Philip was in such haste to make sure of his prize, he invented an excuse for temporarily dismissing the English Ambassador from Madrid, that he might not witness its arrival.

I grow weary of Murillo's Miraculous Conception (in Spain he is called 'The Painter of Conceptions'). The finest is Soult's, in the Louvre. Here, there are four in a row, all standing on crescent moons, all dressed in white, all with blue mantles, black eyes, and clasped hands, exactly in the same pose, with identical details of cloud and angels.

I see some people weeping before them, which I cannot understand. To me they represent nothing—certainly not the Virgin.

It is strange that I have not come upon a single beggar, or ragged boy, or copper-skinned gypsy; nothing but the most uninteresting orthodoxy draped in clouds. Stay! I am wrong! In the Bellas Artes, Murillo is at his worst in a picture of St Elizabeth of Hungary washing the scabby head of a street Arab.

But why follow wandering lights? Nowhere is the great Titian more Titianesque than here. Look at that picture to the right in the great gallery. The subject was dear to him (there is a *replica* hard by)—a full-length Venus on a crimson couch, fair skinned and ruddy haired as the typical goddess should be, listening to a noble-faced youth with dark curling hair, in dark velvet and yellow, who, fascinated by her beauty, turns towards her as his fingers touch the keys of an organ. Beyond, a formal avenue of trees borders a canal—a symmetrical background, such as the old Tuscans loved.

I turn and turn to leave that picture, or rather both those pictures, and I cannot, arrested by some fresh charm. Yet opposite, by the same hand, hangs the finest equestrian por-

trait in the world; the Emperor Charles V. as he appeared at the battle of Muhlberg, clad in a suit of steel, a red *panache* at the summit of his helmet, repeated on the breast of the war-horse on which he rides. Lance at rest, the Emperor holds the reins with a master's hand; horse and man are one —and so he passes, his sunken corpse-like face, grey in its pallor, yet with a power in the eyes god-like, only as of a god weary and seeking rest.

It is interesting to see the same man in another picture, shorn of all regal trappings—a mere mortal, infirm, gouty, dyspeptic, his Irish bloodhound at his heels—and to follow him in his apotheosis, executed during his life, known as 'La Gloria,' a feeble work by Titian, where Charles, his wife, Isabel of Portugal, and Philip and his children, raised upon a piled-up canopy of clouds, are distinguished from the *profanum vulgus* of the blessed by pale blue mantles. Even at the last day it seems it is but decent to separate the family of the Lord's anointed from other folk!

Charles, old and diseased, had the weakness to feel the comfort of this posthumous flattery, and kept 'La Gloria' ever in his sight. Even at Juste his dying eyes sought it, and in his will he specially recommended the care of it to his son, desiring it should be hung opposite his tomb.

It is unfortunate for Velasquez that his equestrian picture, his 'Philip IV. riding in triumph into Lerida,' should be placed so near Titian's. It comes as the prose to the Venetian's poetry. Yet art critics affirm that the drawing of the horse and armour are superior.

His 'Surrender of Breda,' close by, is a great work. No stage business about it all; everyone fitting into his place. The heavy-limbed Flemish governor, with awkward courtesy, face to face with his antagonist, the delicately-featured, intellectual Spinola, who, with the supercilious ease of a conqueror, lays his hand lightly on the other's shoulder.

The characteristics of the two nations are as nicely balanced as in a chronicle. Poor, elegant Spinola! within five years he died broken-hearted, exclaiming, like Francis I., 'I have lost all save honour.'

In the Museum I first acquainted myself with the eccentric Goya, of whom I have already spoken, most Spanish of Spaniards—who would seem to have worked

foaming at the mouth, and eyes out of head — with a sponge, a stick, a broom, a poker, anything, in fact, that came to hand, the painter of witches, brigands, contrabandistas, bull-fights, and bloodshed; also of that antique Court of Charles IV., whose hideous wife and children he, a rank Republican, maliciously caricatured—Goya, the father of the modern Spanish school, a robust intelligence, overflowing with coarse power, from whom I at first turned with loathing, but returned to, so true is he to national life and colour. Between modern and ancient art it would take a month to see all the Madrid gallery, and a month well spent, for there is hardly a bad picture in the whole collection.

I presume only to sound the great keynote in this grand symphonia of art, leaving the bass and the accompaniment, the trills and *fioituri*, to more practised hands. One of the drawbacks of description is the impossibility of conveying to the reader the atmosphere of the writer: and this applies specially to works of art.

For a time I wandered about in a kind of aimless ecstasy; then I began to think, and this was what occurred to me.

Everyone is here at his best, and every school represented by master-pieces, save in the case of Raphael. Many valiant artists of whom I had never heard, others not coming up to my standard, as Murillo (*N.B.*—I had not yet been to Seville). Most of the great Italians and Flemish surpassing themselves. Of course, Italy bears off the palm, and the Spanish school most excels in proportion as it most approaches the Italian. This may be called prejudice, but the educated eye, as with style in diction and phrase in language, owns but one model.

As the King was in Madrid I could not see the palace; but the Armeria—all that remains of the Moorish Alcazar—is close by. This I visited.

Heavens! What a sight. As I enter I stand mute and rub my eyes. Am I dreaming, or am I in the company of the Cid Campeador, Ponce de Leon, Boabdil (*el Rey Chico*), St Ferdinand, James the Wise, the great Captain Gonzalo de Cordova, Columbus, and Charles V.?

From the high windows, reaching from roof to floor, a flood of light streams in on an array of kings, emperors, and generals, they, and their horses, in suits of the most splendid armour ever forged by man.

I had heard much of the Armeria, but, as a rule, detesting old iron cuirasses and helmets, I should not have gone but for my friend the chaplain.

The walls were sheeted with guns, swords, halberds, lances of tournay and battle, muskets, spikes and crossbows, each with its history. From the ceiling hang banners of all nations, trophies of Don Juan of Austria, from Lepanto; of Philip II., from St Quentin; Gonzalvo, from Naples; Cortes and Pizarro, from Mexico and Peru; Columbus, from Cuba and the Southern States. Here are the armed effigies of all the early kings of Navarre, Leon, Aragon and Castille, who have left a name behind them: Charles V. at every age, from the upright, rather heavy youth, to the bent, gouty warrior, in the same massive steel armour in which Titian painted him at the battle of Muhlberg, with the same crimson *panache* on his helmet; as a Roman in embossed scales and close-sitting casque; as a classic in *cinque cento* work, the Virgin on the breastplate and St Barbara behind; as a Byzantine in a damascene suit, wrought like Cellini, down to his invalid litter of black leather, something between a coffin and gondola, along with the four iron plates he carried in his campaigns. Philip, his son, in that same armour, inlaid with gold and silver, the arms of England on his breast, as painted by Titian; Philip studded with cameos and with a Medusa casque; and Philip in silver filagree, given by the city of Pamplona.

Here is Guzman el Bueno, the great ancestor of the Medina Princes, encased in steel; Fernando Cortes, who died a forgotten man near Seville, in the cuirass he wore in Mexico; Columbus, in a plain black and white suit, with silver medallions; the Marquis of Pescara and of Santa Cruz; even Hannibal and Julius Cæsar, besides South-American Indians with fantastic war-paint, feathers and bells of remote Chinese, the moccasons of nameless tribes, steel leggings and shields for royal babes, casques and buckles presented by the Pope, armour for tournaments, savages' bows and lances, horrible warlike masques, and mandarins' dresses of gold and silver.

I can contemplate at my ease Isabel the Catholic, as she appeared as Bellona before the walls of Grenada, her name engraven on her visor, her sword with jewelled handle; St

Ferdinand, the conqueror of Seville; the halberd of Peter the Cruel, the dagger of Pizarro in a steel sheath, the square-cut Moorish head-gear of Boabdil, the far-famed Darindana of Roland the Brave, upon which he spitted his enemies like larks, and cleaved asunder the mountains of the Pyrenees; the broadsword of the great Captain Gonzalo; a scimitar of state borne at royal juntas; the helmet of Jaime of Aragon, surnamed the Conqueror; two magnificent silver shields, bearing the chiselled representation of the Rape of the Sabines and the Triumph of Love; the armed effigy of that Gracilasso de la Vega, who, after years of waiting, cleft in two the head of the impious Saracen who mocked at the Virgin; the suit of the fighting Bishop of Zamora; the cuirass of the Duke of Alva, and the light boyish suit of the unfortunate Don Carlos.

In a corner are arranged Turkish trophies, and casques studded with jewels, huge spurs and golden stirrups, necklaces for slaves, circlets of coral and pearls for sovereigns, votive crowns and crosses for virgins and martyrs, bracelets and collars of the Gothic kings, shells, necklaces, pipes, idols of wood, flutes of reeds, and toys made from the feet of insects. There are whole rows of royal saddles, velvet and gold, coral and gems, embroidery and jasper, satin and tinsel; some filled with royal effigies, some void; historic drums, inscriptions on flags and pennons, and trumpets which sounded clarions to great victories.

That the picture gallery is the finest in Europe *may* be disputed; but it is certain that there is not such another armoury in the world.

CHAPTER VIII.

TOLEDO.

My Cicerone—The Train to Toledo—A Bare Landscape—Aranjuez—Toledo in Sight—In the Omnibus—Beggars—A Sorry Inn—A Repulsive Population—The Cathedral disappointing—Visit of the Virgin—Blanche of Bourbon—Witiza the Goth—Mozaraba Chapel.

THERE are two ways of getting to Toledo from Madrid: to rise early, and take the first train at eight; or to go in the afternoon, sleep there, and return next day.

Dubious as to outlandish Casas de Huespedes and Fondas, I rose betimes and went out into the chill November air, accompanied by the interpreter of the hotel—a young Italian, heavy-limbed and large-eyed, always smoking; who, while stamping about on the brick floor of the station (another railway barn) to keep himself warm, informed me in a free and easy way that he came from Bologna to sing as baritone at the opera, but his voice failing him in the keen air of Madrid, 'Destin fatal!' he cried, he accepted servitude and degradation at the Hotel de Russia. 'But I know my language,' adds he in a lofty way, 'the most *amoroso* in the world; my name is Virgilio, and I read my Dante every day. Italy is the country of poets; but Spain is a nest of ravenous vultures.'

Looking in the baritone's mobile face, with a range of expression from caressing to murder, I began to wish I had left him to clean boots at home, especially when, turning on his heel and humming a bar of 'Sommo Carlo' in a sort of bass falsetto, he went on cheerfully to say that the train to Toledo was stopped two months ago, and that a colleague of his was robbed between the station and the hotel. 'If you go into the country'—(now he has launched into the *rôle* of the Conde de Luna, which, being in a higher key, suits his voice better; all this singing gradually drawing round us an audience of rough Castilians with heavy scarfs—and wondering railway porters)—'they not only steal your money but your clothes. I knew a man who returned quite naked to the Russia.' Not one word did I believe of all this rodomontade, introduced, like the dialogue in opera, for effect; and to rid myself of the fellow, I mounted into a first-class compartment, leaving him to exercise his vocal talents in a third.

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A bare and trackless waste all up and down, with bold contours, but lacking that dignified background of the Sierra Guadarama on the other side of Madrid; long desert lines, along which slowly progressing I studied every shade of umber, brown, sepia, and dull grey that the palette of a Rembrandt could hold; the morning mists, chill and cold, floating upwards from arid rifts and dun-coloured *barancos*, as the sun mounts into the heavens

—the only bright lights, the red collars of the two Guardias Civiles drawn up, musket in hand, at every little station—and how many! Even these otherwise enshrouded in heavy cloaks falling to gaitered ankles. The sky hard and leaden, in unison with the earth; not a light cloud visible, or a little shade of vapour; not a bird audible, nor a dog; even the croak of a friendly frog wanting in the deep watery ditches that line the way.

There are the vast corn-bearing plains of Castile, rich enough in tawny tints when autumn sunsets fall, and the yellow grain, backed by the ruddy afterglow of sunset, lies to be trodden down by red-coated oxen moving as deliberately as their masters in an atmosphere like pure gold—just as in the old times of Hercules and Geryon, ever since corn was—but desolate and cheerless now, and oppressive.

No whirring machinery here, no scientific inventions for saving time and labour. 'Non mi gusta,' says the native. 'When I was born they did so. Why should not our fathers know?' So the ancient plough scratches the black earth, drawn sometimes by thirty team of oxen, and the threshing-floor is as Ruth and Boaz knew it.

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Suddenly I am conscious of a broad river, not over full, a bridge, verdant curtains of wood upon flat banks, and an indication of hills, not so absolutely dust-colour as the plain. This is the Tagus, and I am nearing the Palace of Aranjuez.

For the moment I can think of nothing more appropriate than Queen Hortense's sickly melody of 'Fleuve du Tage,' which I strummed on a guitar in my nonage; when lo! long leafy avenues uprise, and bosky thickets of trembling aspens and willows, horndeans and withys, lengthening into emerald fields, with charming peeps at stiff old Bourbon gardens, yew walks and statues, and the margin of tangled lakes, beside an ancient building with *tourelles* and sloping roofs, the umbrageous plaisaunce where, under spreading elms, brought from England by his father, Don Carlos reasoned of things infinite with Posa, according to Schiller in his life-like drama, bringing that strange era nearer to us than all history—the Princess of Eboli flaunted the power of her charms to regal eyes—Elizabeth, poor Queen, wan-

dered love-sick—a second Phædra—and jealous Philip mused in sombre alleys, deep as his own dark soul.

What a world opens out with the sight of this royal abode! Ferdinand and Isabella passing with mailed footsteps to chivalric wars; the great Charles hunting and fishing in his stalwart youth, and learning from nature those lessons of plants and flowers which served him so well in his many creations at Seville, Granada and St Juste. Uxorious Philip III. and his gentle Queen, arriving with troops of singers, jugglers, players, jousters and *toreros* from Madrid, to fill up the lazy hours! Charles, the 'bewitched,' for thirty-five years monarch of all Spain—goggle-eyed and gaping mouth, yet bearing a strange resemblance to the warrior face of his great ancestor, Charles V.—shutting up his fair ones in a cloistered Parc du Cerfs, and teaching them Paters and Aves for the good of their souls. Philip, the first Bourbon, godson of Louis XIV., who lived between a coffin and a throne, and not waiting for age to cool his passions, leapt at once into the Maintenon period—with no notion in his head but Versailles and Marly (he would certainly have returned there, but for his ambitious Queen)—turning this *sitio real* into a French *château* of brick and stone, and bringing down water from the hills for *les grandes eaux!*

The enlightened Charles III., seeking in these royal solitudes the perfection of those wise reforms which almost arrested the inevitable decadence of Spain, his foolish son Charles IV.—so cruelly caricatured by Goya—and his manly Queen careering about in a short blue riding-habit astride like a man (that same Maria Louisa who induced him to abdicate and sell Spain to France, at the suggestion of her minion, Godoy, Prince of Peace, who happily got nothing for his pains but exile).

And handsome Ferdinand VII., with his four beautiful wives—their portraits hung up side by side at the Madrid Museum—disporting himself joyously in the royal hunting-grounds, until Joseph Bonaparte grabbed up all Spain, and in his turn held his imperial court at Aranjuez.

Nor are these royal traditions forgotten now. Any fine day you may meet 'Prince Charming' (Bourbon only in name, for he is the most constitutional of sovereigns), who

who has railed down from Madrid to look after his stud, hat in hand to every visitor—and many pass. Particularly welcome if they are English, whom he likes, reciprocating the affection felt for him by our nation.

I am quite content to get a glimpse of all this without unduly lingering to examine the priceless porcelain room, lined with plaques of *buen retiro*, after the fashion of the china boudoir in the Palace of Capo di Monte at Naples (Charles III., the artistic philosopher, was King of Naples and of Spain), the huge mirrors, in carved frames of painted fruit and flowers, the gilded upholstery and the marble stairs—the King's bed and the Queen's retiring-room (to a pattern in all palaces), the concealed gallery made by Godoy, from his house in the Park, such as Agnes Sorel used at the Castle of Chinon for the convenience of Charles VII.—and that Royal plaything, the Casa del Labrador, worth millions of francs, with walls and doors inlaid with platina and tortoise-shell.

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And now the rail bears me to a far different scene, where high above arid plains the arrogant bulk of an alcazar towers grey in the landscape, flanked by four square towers: the lines so hard and definite, and the position so unique, it seems as if Nature herself had planted the hill there as a pedestal to receive the load and guide the majestic current of the Tagus through solemn defiles of dolomite rocks as a fosse to guard it. No drop-scene at a play is more appropriate, given a mediæval palace on a height, and a servile city grouping at its feet in long flat lines—its brown cupolas, domes, pinnacles, steeples, turrets, gates, heavy as it were with sighs—granite rocks breaking out between like bones, and giant batteries in decay bordering the deep flood.

I see a lordly road zig-zagging upwards through a golden gate, as for triumphant Sultans to pass through, followed by shouting Berbers; a narrow bridge (of Alcantara), with nobly proportioned arches and walls, Goth, African, and Christian ramping to the brink—a sadly tinted scene, terrible and weird, just touched with burning flecks where the sun falls.

People call Toledo 'the Gothic capital' of Spain, and so it was until the Arabs conquered it. Now it is Moorish and Middle Age in the outlook—the Goth to be accepted

in legends and history more than in definite features. And what matter? Goth or Visigoth—with Ataulfo King in 417—is quite a modern phase in a city boasting Tubal Cain as its founder, if not Nabuchodonosar. Certainly a most ancient capital, and not lightly to be esteemed.

Waiting for us at the bottom of the ridge—for this Gothic seat, like Rome, boasts of seven hills, all steep as the Tarpeian, and ending in broad precipices over the Tagus—stands a rough cord-harnessed omnibus, into which we stumble promiscuously. The driver, gay as a butterfly in his braided jacket and bright buttons, a crimson *faja* (scarf) you can see a mile off, rolled round his waist; a long knife (*navaja*) stuck in for ornament or use, breeches, leggings, and shoes of matting; beside him a hobbledehoy boy, his *zagal*, to whip the horses and shout.

It is my good luck to find myself seated next to a calm-faced man of most pleasant aspect, whom I speedily recognised as the identical Quaker of my Escorial expedition. His wrath, as far as a Christian philosopher and 'Friend' is capable of wrath—hotly kindled against my baritone Virgilio, who, exhilarated by the prospect of breakfast, kicks him under the seat, and shouts out of the window, in a kind of dramatic soliloquy, pointing to the spires of Toledo,—

'*Vorrebbe*, that that useless old cathedral there with its pack of lazy priests was turned into a theatre for me to sing in!'

'Brute!' mutters the Friend between his teeth, and his long-legged companion, whom I have learned to know as ardent Mr W—, echoes 'Swine!' Then the Friend turns to me, raises his hat, and inquires if that person is my servant, launching, as he speaks, a look of daggers at the unconscious Virgilio, whose lazy eyes are glistening with hunger.

'No, indeed,' says I; 'a guide from my hotel.'

'Impudent puppy!' mutters the Friend, who is a man of power, and accustomed to command,—'to behave so in the presence of a lady!'

'He is all you say,' returned I; 'I am utterly sick of him. If you will allow me, I will again gladly join you and your friend, as I did at the Escorial, and leave this creature at the *fonda* till I return.'

'Most proud,' answered the Quaker, making a gallant motion to raise his hat; but the polite intention is nipped in the bud by the lowness of the omnibus, which knocks it to one side, at which Virgilio breaks into a horse-laugh, raising the Friend's wrath to silent white-heat.

Meanwhile, our four wise mules, hurrying on, pass the narrow parapet of the Alcantara bridge, the Tagus foaming below, inky as Tartarus; then wind up a steep ascent with infinite discretion.

The driver screams 'Arrè' (a vicious emphasis on the last syllable of the old Moorish word), the *zagal* flourishes his long whip and screams also, agitating the leading mules into a dangerous gallop quite uselessly, for when let alone the team showed more discretion than the Christian—turning wide round ominous corners, shaving cautiously acutest angles, manœuvring through files of loaded donkeys, not yielding an inch of roadway, and ox-carts too heavy and too lumbering to turn. Now we pass into a labyrinth of deep tortuous lanes, such as the Moors loved for shade in summer and defence in time of war, and finally pull up in the principal Plaza, the Zocodover, with a rude colonnade, where we instantly fall helpless victims to touts, beggars, children (*los niños*), Guardias Civiles, and such strangers as find a residence at Toledo dull, and, yearning for their kind, come out to stare. Oranges and apples are thrust in our face, cups of icy water poured out for us from antique jars, and cigarettes, knives and scissors pointed at us by dozens.

Surrounded as by limpets, we take a flying leap from the Plaza to the Fonda de la Luna, through a mangy patio filled with old carts and waggons caked with mud, and mounting a wooden stair, desire to be fed—apparently the very last request expected by the insolent waiters. The Friend, our spokesman, whose countenance and manners would induce respect even among Red Indians,—gets nothing; the sole eatable available, and on which we fall, as time is precious, being some scraps of bread and cheese with wine some one else had left on the table.

One whole bottle was instantly seized by Virgilio and consumed in a corner, thinking himself unseen, after which feat he collapsed into such dogged impertinence that the Friend sternly forbade him to follow us, and engaged

another guide, by no means reliable either, continually darting off at odd moments, when specially wanted, in search of tobacco, water, or matches, or to salute a friend.

Down to the Cathedral, through alleys like vaults, the vilest pavement, to which a stone quarry is smooth, and on every side old bolted portals and barred windows of abodes once decorated with mediæval art—a sweet Madonna face like a Raphael looking at us from the sculptured doorway of an ill-odoured shop—'Madonna,' in fact, selling *bacalao*, which she touches with her fingers—but with a grace about her and a gravity which altogether lift her from the squalor of her surroundings.

Already I perceive that at Toledo two carriages cannot pass abreast—if anything on wheels ever existed there, which I doubt—and that Isabel the Catholic, in her rich brocaded robes, her daughter Joanna, bejewelled also, though as mad as a March hare, and Doña Berenguela, that holy dame who abdicated to make room for her son, must have either ridden about on mules or been borne in litters or sedan chairs, such as I saw at Madrid carried after the Queen on Holy Thursday, when she made the round of the seven churches.

A picturesque, repulsive population crowd round, ready to finger us if we pause (a boy at Toledo tried to drag off an unfortunate girl's bonnet as she sat sketching the other day, and frightened her to death). Impassible faces that never smile, troops of *pobres* (barely kept at bay by ardent W—'s thick stick), to whom we throw coppers from a safe distance, which they gather up and kiss with a grave 'God be with your grace,' and then hobble off. A plaintive-faced boy, pale as a prisoner kept from fresh air, gazing out of what may have been the entrance to a Gothic palace, piles of oranges on the earth beside him, and instead of Moors or Hebrews, turbans or gabardines, grave citizens in breeches and sombreros.

Now, I am not going to mince matters, and I frankly declare that the Cathedral disappointed me, spite of its *prestige* and the array of sculptured Primates—sovereigns alike in war or peace—Rodrigo, Tenoria, Fonseca, and Mendoza—carved on wall and door.

In point of size Toledo is equal to six ordinary cathe-

drals; but size is not art, nor ponderousness proportion. Outside, it is chaotic; inside, it is modern. I deplore a lack of classic lines, a *trop de zèle* of ornament.

The situation is abominable—down in a hole. There are five superb entrances, all masterpieces (especially the *Puerta de los Leones*), you twist your neck to see, embroidered with statues, the whole surmounted by towers, spires, and Moorish domes.

After the Christian Goths, the Moors made a mosque of it, which possibly may have been worth much, but fastidious St Ferdinand, smelling scandal in the arches, pulled it down, and laid the foundations of the present church, finished two centuries later, bringing the architecture to the period of the Spanish Renaissance, which you come to know as an incrustation of Oriental and Occidental *barocco*, of which I was destined to see much.

Inside, I gaze into a marble world: five great naves, 400 feet long; grand and shadowy perspectives, where unearthly lights glimmer from gorgeous windows, and glorious *rosaces;* the solid bulk of the Coro separated from the high altar, and blocking up the nave in the ugly Spanish way; in front a marble area, vast as a Roman circus; the sculptured walls of the absis broken by chapels and niches, tombs and altars; Santiago, in flamboyant Gothic; De los Reyes Nuevos, where under walls of picturesque carving the royal dead repose; San Ildefonso, built by the Conde de Luna as an ancestral burial-place—a masterpiece of *cinque cento* art, with raised work of birds, fruit, and flowers; a gigantic wall-fresco of St Christopher carrying the Sacred Babe, standing out life-like; two magnificent pulpits like Cellini-work, and two brazen organs on either hand, the pipes thrust out horizontally, like musical weapons to lead harmonious fights.

Separated from my companions—who, as little travelled, are too much disposed to admire everything—I feel that but for the immensity and the deep shadows, and shrouding gloom relieving incongruities, there is but little to admire, and even *that* crude and inharmonious, and that there is an absolute want of the exquisite unity and finish of the Italian churches, so much smaller, it is true (not even St Peter's is to compare in size), where every detail is studied

with a loving hand, and wall, altar and arch join in a glorious whole.

When I returned to the Friend, I found him in earnest conversation with an old English priest, greatly exercised in his mind as to the credibility of the Virgin's visit, which was being circumstantially related to him with such minute particulars as made doubt impossible. Believe it he could not (fancy a Friend believing a Popish miracle!), yet a polite reverence kept him silent, standing beside the slab on which she had poised her foot. (The visit was to Bishop Ildefonso, shortly after he had published a treatise in her honour, and took place at matins, when she kindly accepted his episcopal throne to sit on, and most thoughtfully, before leaving it, presented him with a chasuble, his own being old and shabby.)

'No one can dispute the fact,' says the old priest authoritatively, 'for the chasuble still lies in a chest in the Asturias —only the primate for the time being knows exactly where; and if it were known, it is a relic too sacred for profane eyes.'

'At Messina,' I whispered to the Friend, 'I saw the Virgin's letter—I beg pardon, *a copy*, in most Monkish Latin. At Loretto I was shown her house, uncommonly like a Romagnolo peasant's, with thick walls and small windows; at Saragossa is the alabaster pillar on which she flew from heaven. So why not a visit to a friendly Bishop of Toledo, who had indited the learned 'De Virginitate Mariæ' in her honour?'

At this the Friend turned to me and smiled. The old priest caught the expression and my answering smile, and retreated, disgusted with heretics, into the gloom.

Then, instead of miracles and legends, I led the Friend's practical mind to consider another visit—in the good old times when cathedrals and abbeys were sanctuaries—the visit of a beautiful young Princess, Blanche of Bourbon, flying from her husband, Peter the Cruel, up the steps of the altar at early dawn.

Toledo was in rebellion, holding out against Peter under his bastard brother, Henry Trastamara, the acknowledged son of the real Favorita Leonora, mistress of Alonzo II., who in history does not fall in love with her stepson, or die of a broken heart, as Donizetti makes her in the opera,

but discreetly sticks to the reigning monarch while he lives, and dies treacherously murdered by his son.

While Blanche clings to the altar, the cathedral doors open and an armed knight rides in, his visor down, his long Castilian sword glancing at his side. Between the altar and the Coro he draws rein, while his esquire, in cap and tabard, sounds an alarum.

Then speaks the knight: 'I claim,' says he in a loud tone, hollow through the bars of his helmet, but for all that with the melody of youth in its soft tones, 'the Lady Blanche of Castile as my prisoner! On your life, priests, refuse not!' At which the primate and all the canons, much amazed, commune with the Lady Blanche, whose hair was golden and her skin smooth as snow, who said she was willing to go with a strange knight, who was her friend. And go she did, causing a terrible scandal, for Mrs Grundy, who lived in olden times as well as now—observed that he could be no other than Don Fadrique, another bastard brother of Peter, who, as a Master of Santiago, had a right to enter booted and spurred into any church in Spain; and, moreover, asserted that Don Fadrique had dishonoured her when sent into Navarre to marry her by proxy, causing thereby the split between husband and wife when they came together at Valladolid, which had moved the Lady Blanche to fly.

But it availed nothing. Peter the Cruel, or Don Pedro, as he is called, took the city and drove his brother out, shutting up poor Blanche in the Castle of Medina Sidonia, where a bowstring soon ended her sad life.

The Friend, gallantly indignant at such flagrant misconduct, was glad to know that he should meet with the afflicted Blanche—the Mary Stuart of Spain—in Andalusia; ardent Mr. W— proposing forthwith to gallop over to the castle of Medina Sidonia where she died to investigate particulars, showing thereby more zeal than geography, seeing that Toledo is in the north of Spain, and Medina Sidonia a castle near Cadiz.

Then, pacing these long aisles with listeners eager for facts, I told them how the Goth Witiza was elected King; and after killing or putting out the eyes of his nearest kin, horrified his subjects by insisting that the canons of the Cathedral should marry; and the better to carry out his purpose, electing a

second bishop, his own brother Oppas. 'For,' says Witiza, 'if the Cathedral will not yield itself to me, like a harlot she will have two husbands instead of one.' So much for wicked Witiza, who, as the chronicles say, 'taught Spain to sin.'

'Surely there was retribution?' said the Friend, deeply shocked.

'Yes,' answered I, 'as you will hear hereafter.'

'Have you no more stories about the Cathedral?' asked ardent W—, caring little about the moral.

I thought a moment. 'Yes; I remember, when Don Carlos came of age, his father, Philip II., summoned all the grandees and magnificos to swear allegiance to him at Toledo, Philip seated on a throne in this wide space before the Coro, just where those roseate shadows fall upon the floor. Don Carlos was beside him, his royal robes sitting ill on his slight frame, and among the crowd of nobles came Alva, the Bloody Duke, the proudest of them all, who bowed low before Philip, but not only would not acknowledge Don Carlos' presence by kneeling and kissing his hand, but ostentatiously brushed past him with no respect at all. At which the Prince, turning his sad eyes on his father, asked, "Whether this was done with his liking?" "No," answered Philip; and called Alva back, and commanded him to kneel. But by this time Don Carlos lost his temper too, and putting up his thick Austrian lip, would not give him his hand; so Alva passed, and swore no fealty. And from that hour dates the deadly strife between them which ended in Carlos' death.'

We did not forget to glance at the Mozarabe Chapel under the great eastern tower—very grand outside—where mass has been celebrated according to the Gothic rite from the earliest ages—a privilege permitted by the easy-tempered Moslems when they conquered Toledo, Alfonso VI., when he in his turn turned out the Moors; but again restored, thanks to the good sense of Cardinal Ximenes. To this day the original Litany exists (*spite of the Vatican*), a record of those primitive days when Gothic Recaredo brought Toledo into the Christian fold, and so many important church councils were held within these walls.

CHAPTER IX.

TOLEDO CONTINUED.

Picturesque Streets—Sala del Moro—Gothic Quarter—Wamba's Castle—The Tower of Roderick—Fiordalinda—Tower of Hercules—The Jews at Toledo—Their Synagogues—Mosque or Synagogue?—Sta. Maria la Blanca—Sunset and a Chat with Children—Church of St Juan de los Reyes—Oratory of Santo Cristo de la Luz—Santo Cristo de la Vega—Hospital of Santa Cruz—The Alcazar.

THEN the Friend, Arthur W—, and I went out into the empty streets, shrunk up with age and ruin, yet covering the same space as when Toledo easily held 200,000 souls, and every palm of standing-groud was utilised.

Not an inch now, abandoned and desolate as it is, that is not rich with platuresque frontals, mouldering heraldic emblems, balconies of rusty wrought iron, portals with arabesque posts and lintels, Middle Age hinges and huge Moorish nails; *cinque cento* doorways, crenulated walls and terraced roofs. Here is a beggar's hole, beside which was once King Pedro's Palace in layers of coloured brick; a Castilian peasant corn-winnowing under Saracenic domes; knives, swords and blades spread for sale in the shadow of royal shrines, and wild unkempt children selling coins and amulets. Thus we come upon what remains of the beautiful Arab Taller del Moro, where Ambrose, the Moorish Governor of Huesca, took his ease with a harem of dark-eyed damsels, inviting carelessly to a banquet 400 citizens (just as Sagasta or Canovas might summon their political followers to Seville or Madrid), when, to save time and food, he cuts off their heads as they enter.

The Taller stands on a barren plot of garden ground, thick with laurel-rose (a draggled, rain-stained blossom left here and there), and scraggy pomegranates on rank grass cropped by donkeys—a magnolia tree a roost for turkeys, and the high-domed hall, encrusted with what were once mosaics, filled with groups of dark-skinned figures grouped round fires, manufacturing lucifer matches. Two smaller

saloons on either side, domed also, and parted by the fretted workmanship of Saracenic arches—the delicately carved cornice and honeycombed panels bare and soiled, the cedar-rafted roof blackened by fire.

Through a filigree-worked window a cactus pokes in its fat head, in company with aloes, and little vagrant birds build their nests and chatter on the same marble floor where mailed feet and jewelled slippers went and came, and Eastern robes and snowy turbans made strange shadows under the moon.

Some day the Taller will be consumed by the fires so often kindled here, and another graceful monument be missed of the courtly Moors who for centuries reigned so splendidly at Toledo.

In the Gothic quarter we pass into a dreamy world with a look of fairy tales about it, intensely interesting to the Friend, whose practical English mind, broken to business, is for the first time brought face to face with such stories, to which he listens with an amused smile.

'The Castle of the Farmer King, Wamba,' pompously announces the guide, pointing to a dust-heap rising out of rocks in an expanse of adamantine landscape.

It is but a name, truly, yet one which takes one back to the age of Charlemagne, when, as the story goes, Wamba, poisoned by his successor, Ervigius, was clothed in a monk's cowl for burial—a religious garment, once assumed, never to be put aside. Unfortunately for Wamba, he recovered, and wished to reassume his kingly robes, but was forbidden by Ervigius, backed by the priests. '*Tiempo del Rey Wamba*' is still a Spanish saying, dimly recalling a national benefactor, equivalent to our Saxon King Edward the Confessor, whose name served for centuries to twit the Norman invader. These squabbles of Wamba with Ervigius weakened the Gothic rule, and emboldened the Moors after the defeat of Roderick; and we have Roderick himself a shadowy form, in his tower, on a dull expanse over the Moorish mills, still grinding the city's corn industriously on the current of the Tagus, parting granite cliffs and treeless hills, and stretching away into weird lines vague as these histories.'

Now, with the name of Roderick I could relieve the

Friend's mind as to that retributive justice he desired for the wicked Witiza; for while the Gothic nation lay steeped in dissolute ease, Roderick the Youthful, son of Theodofredo, uprose, and with a hasty levy took the field, and made Witiza prisoner.

Brought in chains before the young knight, he eyed him with a stern glance. 'Let Witiza,' said he, 'suffer the evils to which he has doomed others.' So his eyes were put out (*more Gothorum*) with burning irons, and he languished in prison to his death.

Yet, with the fate of Witiza before him, Don Roderick, once become King, sinned likewise. From a balcony on his tower (it was on the site where we are standing) Roderick looked down into the baths of La Cava (we are close on the river brink), and like King David with Bathsheba, beheld the fair Florinda, daughter of Don Julian, bathing in the flood. She and her fellows, in an engaging way half in, half out of the water, like Nereids on the rocks—measuring their legs to see which were the longest—a sight altogether too much for the young King, seeing that Count Julian's daughter not only had the roundest and the longest legs and the best turned ankles, but was most bewitching altogether.

Now, the foundations shown us of the Tower and the 'Baños de la Cava' are so near, one fancies Roderick must have often seen Florinda if he wished; but on this point history is silent. The consequences are historic, however, and most fatal, seeing that, according to the Gothic custom, the children of the nobles were consigned to the custody of the King as pages and handmaidens, and that Count Julian had lately brought Florinda himself to Toledo, saying, 'I confide her to your protection, O King. Be to her as a father!' which of course, Roderick promised, and enrolled her among the cherished attendants upon his Queen.

Here, too, once stood the legendary Tower of Hercules, for which 'the Friend' insisted on searching in the map, and not finding it, we three, ardent Mr W—, much excited, and myself, set off in a body to search, but were happily arrested by the Tagus, and the necessity of changing clothes had we passed it, or we might to this day be still wandering in a vain quest. Hercules, whatever Ovid may say, here, at Toledo, is nothing but an enchanter, who performed his

labours by magic, and this cave or grotto, running to unknown depths, his laboratory for talismans and necromancies. The old door, guarded by an inscription, setting forth that whenever a king shall pass the threshold, the empire of Spain will fall, a warning much respected by the other Gothic kings, Wamba, Ervigius, Ergicias, and Witiza, who ordered locks and chains and iron portals to be added to make it fast, but despised by foolish Roderick, now debauched and bankrupt, and in urgent need of cash. So with torches, lanterns, cords, and hammers, he sets forth to explore; breaks the locks and chains, wisely put up before him, and finds himself in a mysterious chamber; in the midst, a huge bronze statue upon a pedestal, wielding a massive club (evidently Hercules himself), with which he beats the granite rocks with hollow sound, raising a great whirlwind—to whom Roderick advances, and dropping his crown (for in those primitive days kings and queens wore their crowns like hats, and walked about in them), asks permission to proceed. What the bronze statue thought of the young Goth and his courtiers, is not recorded, but at all events, he left off rapping and pointed to a coffer, on the lid of which appeared these words: 'Open me and thou shalt see wonders,' at which Roderick and his courtiers, in the highest glee, prepare their pockets and mantles for a shower of gold; but on lifting the lid, behold! there was nothing but a linen roll painted in vivid colours with multitude of soldiers, horses, elephants, and camels, in two camps, arrayed against each other in order of battle, some mounted, and some on foot. Another inscription underneath, fatally distinct, which says, 'He who opens this chest shall lose the kingdom of Spain by these armies.' Then, rising out of the linen roll, the pigmy soldiers, Christian and Moslem, swell into real men and fill the vault, clashing their weapons with such devilish noise that the cave rings like thunder. Nor is this all. Affrighted by the magic spectacle, when Roderick looks about to escape, he reads in flaming letters on an opposite wall, 'Alas! poor King! thou shalt be dispossest of all!' a climax so over overwhelming that he rushes out, and in that same night a terrible earthquake shakes the city, sweeping away all vestige of the tower.

. . . . . .

As well one might say that Toledo was 'the capital of the Jews,' as 'of the Goths.' Toledoth is the Hebrew name for Toledo, and hither they came in great numbers after the sack of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. 'The Jews fled to Tarshish,' says the Bible. Now, Tarshish is the Scriptural name for Spain. When the Moors besieged Toledo, the Jews, resenting the persecution of the Christian Goths, assisted them, and were treated well in return. Indeed, tradition says that the children of Israel betrayed the city into the hands of that fiery old Moor, Taric el Tuerto, and gives this as the reason why they were execrated in Spain. At all events, they retained possession of synagogues and privileges, and continued wealthy and prosperous through the entire period of the Moorish occupation, until massacred by the Christians in 1408. Next to the Cathedral, the synagogues are certainly the most noticeable monuments.

El Transito, now San Benito, high and dry on a windy platform, overlooking the bridge and gate of Martino, and those Moorish mills still turning so industriously for ages in the Tagus, was built by the rich Ben Levi, friend and treasurer of Pedro el Cruel, until that panther-like young monarch eased him at once of his money and his head. 'A mosque or a synagogue?' one asks on entering. Now it is a church dedicated to the Order of Calatrava, with three aisles of engrailed horseshoe arches and octagonal columns (the Spaniards adorned them with stucco figures), honeycombed cornice, stone lacework, and superbly carved *artesonado* roof; the sculptured shields of Leon and Castile mixed with Psalms and Hebrew text in Kufic letters, the soil on which it stands holy, as brought from Zion.

Santa Maria la Blanco, in the same quarter, is as old as the ninth century; by turns synagogue, hospital, hermitage, stable, warehouse, and sanctuary—now wisely placed under the local committee of art.

At this period of our walk, the Friend, overwhelmed by the flood of new and curious associations presented to his intelligent mind, and ardent Mr W— bringing his long legs to bear, to say nothing of myself, long since dragging behind them like a limp bramble—selected a bare spot on a natural terrace overhanging the river, to sit down and eat some bread and grapes.

Before us the sun was sinking into fields of gold, a globe of fire purpling behind clouds—the crenulated city walls, as cut by the Moors, wonderfully preserved; porticoes, cupolas, spires, the bold horseshoe arch of the Gate of Visagra, the convent of Santa Cruz, the burnished front of the Arab Puerta del Sol, and the graceful lines of the church of San Juan des los Reyes, with its alternate walls of black and white, and curious drapery of hanging chains, placed there when the Christian captives were set free.

For one brief moment every tower, dome, minaret, and peak rose aflame—then died out in the deep purple of approaching night.

'Where,' I ask, 'among sun and shade, stood that princely abode given by Charles V. to the Constable of Bourbon after his treason to Francis I.?' Its site, rather—for when he left it no man would possess it, because it was 'the traitor's house,' and 'treason found no root in Spanish soil.' 'Where?' but not one answered me.

. . . . . .

'No, my little maid,' I hear the Friend saying to a black-eyed little *niña*, with pink cheeks and raven hair, pouting out a pair of coral lips, her unwashed fingers extended for some grapes. 'No! you are far too dirty to be fed; but all the same, a dainty little soul.'

Something in the tone of his voice affected the child with a sense of reproach, and without understanding the words, she turned away and sobbed, at which his parental heart melted, and he drew her to him, and comforted her with a kiss. Other children gathered round us for pennies, then, arrested by the calm suavity of the Friend's look, lingered to gaze at him; an elder one leading off with a canticle to the Virgin, the rest chattering and carolling in the most delightful way.

One small voice, sweeter than the rest, came from a pale child, with dreamy eyes turned towards the glories of the western skies, as if she saw visions there—her tiny fingers beating an inaudible rhythm upon his knee. With a mild reverence the Friend laid his hand on her bright head and blessed her, at which, as with some subtle instinct, all the children grouped round him, asking to be blessed too—recalling another form seated on another height in a far Eastern

land, around whom Hebrew little ones gathered to listen to Divine words.

Quite a little crowd about us now—bigger girls carrying tow-headed babies painfully in feeble arms, but smiling (for the young cleave to the young, even though suffering from their incapable nursing)—then a mother or two crept out from adjoining walls.

One managed to make us understand that a *chiquita* had jumped into the Tagus last year from a rock just under where we sat, *because she was alone*, and was found three weeks after, so changed, her own father did not know her.

(The speaker was the mother of the dreamy child.)

'God send,' she said, 'that my little Pepita' (who had now done singing, and was leaning on the Friend's arm) 'may not do likewise by-and-by. She is melancholy child, and lives solitary.'

'Hush, woman,' answered the Friend with a frown, speaking through W—, who understands Spanish; 'Pepita will live as long as it pleases God to spare her. Neither more nor less.'

Then he rose and we followed, with many a 'May *usted* go with God!' 'Let us all hope to meet in God's parlour!' 'Adios, Hermanos de Dios!' shouted after us.

The church of San Juan de los Reyes, built by Isabel the Catholic, and presented to her husband, as a *sachet* or *bonbonnière* might be in modern times, on his return from the Portuguese campaign—stands well on a natural platform.

Unfortunately, the quaint fringe of votive chains outside, which give it such an historic character, is dropping off, or are stolen. In a few years none will remain.

Inside, the great nave is divided by four vaults, with intersecting ribs, a frieze or cornice above, as in the synagogue, formed of Gothic letters round the semicircle of the abasis, platanesque sculptures on the walls of the arms of Spain, cyphers of various kings, shields, eagles, monograms, and badges, and, starting from the graven pillars of the nave, statues the size of life with life-like action

But the signal beauty of San Juan lies in the Gothic cloisters—a poem in stone: one side, thanks to the French, an utter ruin; the rest standing out in purest lacework light as a dream, embroidered with every extravagance of leaf,

fruit, flower, bird or beast, writhing scorpions, monkeys in cowls, bleared witches and angel profiles; each arch different to the rest, yet all harmonious—not only bound together by stone leaves and tendrils, but wreathed with a trellis of natural vines, through which the rays of the setting sun shoot like a god—a cloister never to be forgotten, the apotheosis of decorative Gothic, arrived at such an acme of perfection, it is evident that the next step forward must fall into extravagance and *barocco.*

I do not feel bound to describe all the *notabilia* of Toledo, but I must recall that most wonderful little mosque, now the oratory of Santo Cristo de la Luz, under the hill of the Alcazar—a place no bigger than a doll's house, with four circular columns (the capitals carved into fir cones) from which spring sixteen deep-cut horse-shoe arches, white as snow, the roof forming itself into five half domes.

Into this little mosque, standing handy to the gate, the conqueror of the Moors, Alonzo VI., wandered in search of some convenient place wherein to say his prayers, and knelt lowly before the Mithrab, then hung up his shield as momento of his victory. And there it hangs now, before me, after eight centuries, a golden cross on a red field.

Santo Cristo de la Vega, another such church, is outside the town, in what I may call the Roman quarter, also the Hospital of Santa Cruz, built by Cardinal Mendoza, with an inner patio, of fairy-like lightness, and the most splendid decorated staircase in all Spain.

Then, with barely time to do justice to it, we mounted the ascent to the Alcazar, which has throned over us all day, condensing in itself the monarchy of Spain. First Arab and tapia-walled with Moorish turrets, then rebuilt as a renaissance palace by Charles V., afterwards condemned, as we see it, by the hand of Philip II. and his detestable architect Herrera, to become a flat, bare mass, with only the Moorish towers to justify its name—it stands an historic monument eloquent in reproach.

Yet, spite of all changes, the Oriental features of the Moors still cling to it: the machicolated turrets and the towers are Saracenic and Middle Age; the patio, or court, Arab, with a double arcade of airy arches, which, though now turned in European fashion, call out loudly they were not so once.

An eastern vestibule, where subject kings awaited conquerors, a carved staircase, down which the regal trains of anointed queens once rustled, carved balustrades, over which court beauties lingered, and walls heavy with heraldic and warlike trophies.

What footsteps have echoed through these halls! What regal presence adorned them—Iberian, Roman, Visigoth; Wamba, Witiza, comely Roderick; Berber, Moors, Castilian kings, El Potenute, El Impotente, a red-haired bastard of Trastamara, a swaggering Alfonzo, Velasquez's Philip, the staid Dowager Queen, Berenguela, fair Isabel the Catholic, the widow of Philip IV., the mother of Carlos el Soco, Joanna the Mad, the Cid as the first Christian Alcayde, and Amalekite Kassabah—the palace fortress, crowning the uttermost ends of the known world, beyond which the east looked into the hyperborean darkness of the west, the geographical centre of all Spain—supreme, regal—foundations laid in legend, and ramparts fused in the glimmer of Oriental song; a refuge from mediæval invasion, and the superb residence of later kings!

CHAPTER X.

MADRID TO SEVILLE.

Seville is Ugly!—Hotels in Spain—What a 'Patio' is—The Hotel Madrid—The Way They manage Matters in Spain—The Post-Office—The Road.

I REACHED Seville by an excellent express in fifteen hours from Madrid.

Oh dear! It is so ugly. Take it all in all, I never saw an uglier town. It does seem hard to have come so far for this!

Why do people write such crams about Spain, and paint all up to a flaming pattern? I begin to think that all tours are concocted as Dumas Père treated Switzerland from his armchair at St Germain, and that all tourists, except myself, are arrant knaves.

I had pictured to myself a second Palermo, La Conca

d'Oro, a *vega* of oranges, citrons, pomegranates, vines—burnished palms glancing in the sun, and a screen of lofty mountains darkened with ilex and chestnut.

I find a perfectly flat plain. Not a little stretch, but a *bonâ fide* plain, extending, for all I know, to the rock of Gibraltar; a boundless cornfield, fertile,—it is true, and good, but utterly uninteresting. Not a tree to break the everlasting lines, and here and there, at far distances, olives. That is all.

It began in the morning light at Cordova, at which I rubbed my eyes, and went on and on, unbroken, following the windings of what looked to me an insignificant river, but which I find to my astonishment is the far-famed Guadalquivir.

We pass a ruined tower on a green mound, which somebody said was the Castle of Almodovar, a great name in the Moorish wars. Another tower, called Hornachuelos, on the summit of another green mound, and we espy occasionally groups of white houses in the midst of spongy-looking enclosures, full of cabbages and artichokes.

Not a glimpse of the Giralda Tower of the Cathedral, a thing so beautiful we were to fall prostrate before it, or the classic hills over Italica, the birthplace of Trajan, the largest city next to Rome in ancient days.

No Moorish barbican on imperial walls, nor minarets, nor domes, nothing but a blank, muddy river dammed up between high banks, because its bed is higher than the town, and the chimneys of Mr Pickman's (I beg his pardon, Marquis Pickman) china manufactory at the Cartuja. Not a single indication of the latitude, but some hedges of aloes and cactus along the rail, and once the glimpse of an orange-tree, laden with fruit, at which my companion, ardent Mr W—, visiting the south for the first time, woke up, cried 'Oh!' and relapsed again into slumber.

And this blanched, low-roofed town is Seville—the Iberian Athens, the garden of southern Spain; Boetica of the Scipios, beloved of the Moors, the vaunt of the Romans, the song of poets in all ages, the theme of chronicles from east and west; the elegant Court of Peter the Cruel, the abode of Columbus and St Ferdinand, the birthplace of Velasquez and Murillo; the essence of Oriental elegance and Christian pomp—gay, bright, insouciant; the tent of the courteous

Arab, the cradle of Don Juan, Figaro, Almaviva, and Rosina,—Miserere!

I must confess my heart was in my boots when I arrived at the station—a ramshackle place, like all Spanish stations —into which is gathered the gigantic corn-crops of the plains outside. Then I revived a little as I saw H— upon the platform waving a welcome, also under the influence of Spanish politeness, even in the common folk; saw the luggage (none of it was stolen) put into a tilted cart like a gipsy's, out of which, by the way, one bonnet-box fell, because a donkey loaded with meal-bags ran violently against it,—then we plunged into a broad, common-place street of whitewashed houses one storey high, with no possible pretension to anything better than clean slums.

I had left winter in Madrid; here a tropical sun greeted me, and an azure firmament canopied the sky. I traversed absurd little modern squares, where strings of donkeys trooped, their bells ringing; mule carts rolled splashing in deep holes; veiled women passed, fat priests lingered, and dark-complexioned men gossiped on chairs and benches under the palms.

It is not far from the station to the Hotel de Madrid, but far enough for me to understand that modern Seville is neither beautiful nor grand; but here I am, and I must make the best of it.

In Spain you must live where you can, not where you choose; most of the fine sites on the mountain ranges are not safe, and if they were, there are no inns nor decent means of life.

Whoever has seen a country *posada* will understand this. You must sleep with the cocks and hens, have a pig for your follower, consort with rude carters and mule-drivers, and eat dinners cooked in rancid oil; the people are very civil, but good manners are empty food, and vermin not amenable to reason. This drives you into the towns. In the towns you cannot pick and choose; the once great capitals of Spain, such as Toledo, Burgos, Leon and Valladolid, are atrocious both as to comfort and climate. So you are narrowed up to a few winter cities—Madrid, cold but healthy, or Barcelona, Seville, Malaga, and Cadiz, more or less paradises of warmth and sun.

People talk of Alicante, but it is a mere port with no lodgings and a poor hotel. Let its faults be what it may, there is no place like Seville.

. . . . . .

I am bound to confess that the Hotel Madrid is a very comfortable place. You enter by a patio surrounded by colonnades, and find yourself face to face with huge bananas, ferdinandias sheeted with white trumpet-flowers, feathery pepper trees and stately palms.

'Now, to be intelligible, I must explain that a 'patio' is a *spécialité*, half Moorish, half Roman; not a court, nor a garden nor a hall, yet all three. In hot weather people sleep there under the arcade, the beds and furniture being brought down, and dining-tables, pianos and *étagères* established under the sky. Between the patio and the street there is an open-worked iron gate; around it statues. Fountains bubble in the midst, two or three, according to taste and water, shrouded with beautiful plants and giant lilies. You tread on marble floors and pass under arches, and gaze through doorways leading to inner patios, some open to the sky, some covered in by glass,—as into a book where the pages of domestic life are turned over in public.

'The Madrid' is an endless place!

It took me days before I could find my way; always in a fresh patio, or plunging into occupied rooms, and screaming out to be taken back to Number 48, and getting no one to understand me, though smiled at affectionately.

Now I have mastered it.

In that corner under the pillars lives the director, a fresh-coloured young man, with a quiet voice never uplifted, and a smile like a schoolboy. Look at him walking up and down before his door, his hands crossed behind his back, his weather-eye on the waiters collected in a great inner hall. Apparently he is poking up the goldfish in the fountain, but in reality murmuring a remark to a group of underlings who sit too long smoking. He turns to bow to an entering guest, answers every possible question you can put to him, and generally gives you to understand that *your* comfort and *your* well-being is the one object which occupies his life. He is young, our director, but wise; and his hand grasps the keys of the republic within these marble halls tight as a screw.

Our porter lives under that further archway opposite, behind which runs up a staircase like a set scene at a play. The porter has his *brasero*, cigar, and newspaper, backed by the card-rack of strangers' names: he wears a cloak, and has his own special chairs and visitors, with a wife and child on Sundays.

Hard by in a corridor the women of the establishment wait on a bench to be summoned to dinner. Not a bare head amongst them; all handkerchiefs and veils, earrings and curls (they are very old and ugly—the director will have no other). There they sit, murmuring to each other in subdued tones, with arms crossed on their breasts like slaves.

A friendly old-fashioned clock follows, then doors, doors, doors, up to the saloon occupying another side of the square patio.

Now this saloon, well-mirrored, with a stove, which, when lighted, is absolute suffocation, and tables covered with newspapers, is at this present time of writing occupied by a crowd of men all smoking (no one asks your leave to smoke in Spain; every man has a light to puff in your face, at a *table-d'hôte*, in a train, shop, or theatre, cigarettes rolled up then and there with the fingers). H— is plaguing the American traveller, and asking him who lived in his diggings before Adam? To which the Yankee, with much discretion, replies, that not being an archæologist, he cannot tell. Old P—, a selfish curmudgeon, always abusing railways and hotels, and always living in both, has hooked himself on to a stranger to grumble. The big Gemini brothers loll in armchairs half asleep, side by side with the English colonel fresh from India, ready to be rude on the slightest provocation. A German, who insists that all land must have machines (he is sent out by a company); old W—, who courts pretty ladies with fans and bonbons, under the excuse of reading aloud his wife's letters; and little J—, sent to induce Spaniards to buy hosiery.

It is easy to predicate of the next group, framed between two pillars, from whence an acrid smell of dinner rises. The waiters are seated at a long table (eight of them); our major-domo at the top, the Italian help, newly come, and meek as yet, as a foreigner, at the bottom.

Peeping in, I can see Pedro, the bumptious man, who is so fat the director says he must go unless he starves him-

self; the Cuban, who knows three words of French and presumes on it; Francesco, so grand in his cloak and sombrero on Sundays, I took him for a duke; the little Russian, Emanuel, who speaks all languages, and plumes himself like a bird at my mirror when he brings up my lunch; Enrique, 'the grand master,' as H— and I call him; Tonio, the bath man, who lights my *brasero*, in a dirty linen jacket and fur cap (Tonio, an inferior, yet still a brother, is not seated, like the rest, at the table, but hangs on at a corner, raising roars by his quaint jests); and serving-women generally running in and out.

After a time, the white-coated cook enters—the cat also genteelly condescending, with her tail well raised; then the tables are cleared, the women-kind waiting on the bench outside appear with Antonio and the lesser ones, and the waiters adjourn under the banana leaves to smoke.

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Talking of the arrangements of the hotel reminds me of a little incident that befell me here, illustrative of the way in which they transact business in Spain.

I went one day to the post-office to register a letter, accompanied by my man, the trusty Geronimo. It was two o'clock, and I was met on the threshold by a grave-faced man in rather shabby clothes—the *capo* (postmaster).

Courtesying as low to him as to a royalty—a civility he returned in due form—I presented my letter, upon which he intimated in a lofty manner that I had come too late, and must return *mañana*. Upon which, with another low courtesy, I was retreating—the *capo* squeezing himself under the archway to do me honour—when, sullenly changing his attitude, and looking at me, he graciously intimated that he would so far overlook precedent, and, at that unusual and most inopportune hour (two o'clock) undertake to perform the necessary rites of registration. (Figure to yourself this scene under a horseshoe gateway, before a patio filled with dark-leaved oranges reaching up to the first-floor.)

Waving his hand majestically, the *capo* led me into a sort of wooden tent, supported by bare posts—where, as I gathered from the printed names of towns over little pigeon-holes, the letters were sorted—into a very ill-smelling small sanctum, where, with another majestic hand-wave, he mutely

expressed his desire to see me seated on a well-worn couch.

Then commenced the important business of registering my letter—a process no one apparently had witnessed before, or knew how to set about. One official after the other came in—some in uniform, some without—stared, turned it over, spoke in mysterious whispers with the grave-faced thief, then departed.

After much consultation, and the most dignified sauvity all round, blending with a delicate deference towards the *capo* (he wore a grey cap)—I seated on the leather couch, looking on—my servant was called, and despatched to the nearest tobacconist's to buy a stamp. Away he flew, hat in hand, as if pursued by furies. Evident relief all round, and a pause; the chief sitting bolt upright, sad and grave, mounting a severe guard on my innocent-looking letter. (All this was done with the very acme of politeness; only, as I was in a hurry, I would gladly have accepted some other form of deference.)

When Geronimo and the stamp returned (Geronimo had flown, but the tobacconist must take his time, and, if smoking, finish his cigarette before he could address himself to serve a stamp), the *capo* (round whom revolved various satellites, more or less interested), solemnly taking the stamp in hand, examined it carefully, then, consulting an elderly personage, who took a certain lead in the affair (what passed I cannot say—I speak little Spanish), announced that the stamp was insufficient.

Again exit Geronimo, accustomed to such processes and seeing nothing in it, flying.

Meanwhile, I sat on the leather couch as on needles. With that solemn *capo* before me I dared not expostulate. Of what use? He would have looked on me as an ill-bred maniac! Driven to despair, I thanked him: at which he bowed and raised his grey cap. (Dreadful man! Catch me at the post-office again, and you may beat me!)

Another stamp—another lengthened consultation, at which three officials assisted—the *capo alone* evidently overweighted in the performance of this onerous duty. Then I was invited to take my place at a table, and to write my name.

Of course, at the desk of the Postmaster-General of

Seville there was neither paper nor pen. *Plumas and paper* were called for, and after due delay appeared.

I wrote my name, and rose to go. 'No; your Christian name.' I added it. 'How was it pronounced?' I explained, and of what nation I was, edging towards the door. I would have made a rush for it and the orange-trees, but the *capo* followed me like a ghost. Once in the street, I made a dive for freedom. Not at all. A man in the post-office uniform pursued me, and plucking Geronimo from behind, intimated that my presence was again needed. Gods and little fishes! This was too much! Reproach was on my lips—but reproach who? The *capo* was standing bareheaded under the Moorish arch. In slow, measured tones he conveyed to me the fact that I must return between the the hours of five and six to receive the receipt for my letter!

Now, how can this great and noble country—and such it is—govern itself after this fashion? How can the stately Spaniard but be backward in the race of Time?

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So much for the post. Now for the road.

The thieving in Andalusia is a caution. Nothing is safe inside or out. A gold brooch left on my table for an hour at once disappeared. The Governor sent me a message entreating me as being in an hotel not to wear my diamonds; and as for supposing that locks fast, and keys in your pocket, is a security on the *rail*, I pity you!

At this very time, I can name three separate families staying here, who have had their boxes opened and robbed between Cordova and Granada. One hears the most dismal stories. One poor English lady, travelling with a solitary Gladstone, had it stolen.

Other rich ladies lost Indian shawls, laces, and jewels, all on the route to Granada.

Some one adroitly opens the boxes in the van while the train is proceeding. They have certainly plenty of time, and they utilise it. Spanish trains are as deliberate as the nation. Ardent Mr W— lost in this way twenty pounds and his diamond studs. Being ardent, you should have heard him! It did no good—he could not punch all the guards' heads in the Peninsula, and the particular guard was not forthcoming. Brigands and guerillas in time of

war or revolution turn into pilferers in time of peace. Andalusia, and the mountain borderland of the Sierra Morena, between Madrid and Cordova, and the rocky range about Murcia, are the worst localities—always the first to throw off the bridle of law, the last to return to it.

Nor is this terrible scourge of black-mail not protested against. All the English consuls in the south, *except one* at Granada, are in a continual state of official protest and correspondence. Formerly the robberies were on a colossal scale: the trains stopped and the money bags seized. This occurred two years ago, when, by an ill-chance for the brigands, Marshal Serano was in the train with a military escort, and so chivied the miscreants that nineteen out of twenty-five were taken and hung on the spot.

That sort of thing will not be attempted again in a hurry, but the thieving continues.

CHAPTER XI.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—A WALK WITH H—.

A Labyrinth of Streets—The *Gitana*—A *Cul-de-sac*—Seville Streets—An Improvised Fair—Hospital of El Sangre de las Cinco Llagas—The Old Walls—Leper Hospital—The Cemetery—A Child's Funeral—Convent of St Geronimo—House of Pilate—Beset by Beggars—Bust of Don Pedro—Story of Pedro and the Alcalde.

We waited so long for H— in the patio, that much as I love the sight of the great bananas flinging themselves about in green hysterics, I grew weary and began to wish that they would grow like other trees and not torment me. Then E— and I walked up and down that commonest of all common-place squares, the Plaza Nueva, under a dome of blue. At last arrived H—, full of apologies—business had detained him.

So we set forth, plunging into the alleys of old Seville, as into a labyrinth, one alley twin-brother of the next. The same open doors, the same worked-iron gates, the same patios—palatial, small, or middle-sized, only always a patio

—the same eccentricity as to windows, discrepancy of outer walls, overhanging miradores, and gardens on flat roofs.

I have mentioned a man, married to one of two sisters, uncertain as to which was his wife; but that a Sevillian should mistake his own house door for his neighbour's and walk in, seems the most natural thing in life.

At one point, H— made a bolt down one of those tortuous *calles*, blanched with whitewash (if but a speck appears from damp or rain on any side-walk, instantly you see a fellow with a pail and brush whitening it), and pulls up under a horseshoe archway, where a poor *gitana* is sitting upon the stones—a creature with a skin so ripe and ruddy, an African sun seemed to be blazing on her out of some corner. There she sat, an unconscious picture, her head bound in a cotton cloth, her long straight locks of raven hair falling, her lustrous eyes turned upon us, hugging to her breast an olive-faced infant, the ditto of herself diminished.

All the *perros* we possessed came dancing out of our pockets of their own accord, and she took them, laying them slowly on her palm, then kissed them with Spanish gravity, and thanked us with her eyes.

To H— she said, 'I had money to spare once, before I took a *caballero*. Three *pesetas* a day in the tobacco manufactory, and a pink gown like the rest, and flowers in my hair; but he ruined me. One day I fainted, and was carried out, and they said I must come back no more to make a disturbance. Then the *chiquita* was born. *Aimé mi pobre chiquita.*' Here she clasped the brown baby wildly, and said no more, she was sobbing.

I stroked the little one's soft cheeks, and spoke to it childish fashion, at which it held out its arms to come to me. A smile flashed across the mother's face, more genuine than the pennies had produced, and again she thanked us mutely with her eyes.

Whether the potency of the *gitana's* eyes confused H— or business transactions absorbed him, I cannot say, but he rushed on in front vaguely, brandishing his stick.

When asked where he was going, he answered, 'At random; we shall turn up somewhere.' And sure enough we did turn up in a little grass-grown plaza, surrounded by mean house-fronts. Still rushing on, and nearly upsetting

a solitary infant, seated on the flags, H— strode into a *cul-de-sac*, and had to confess that he had lost his way. So back we turned, this time avoiding the infant, a grave Spanish child, no way alarmed, and going on tranquilly with its game—passed two merry-faced girls, with pearly teeth, and roses in their hair, who nodded and laughed at our evident perplexity, giving us a 'Vaya con Dios' as we passed, and were finally conducted by a man who turned up out of a stable, and insisted (let H— protest as he might) upon accompanying us to the nearest thoroughfare, where we parted with courteous bows and the assurance that he was 'a los piedes de usted.'

Now we are off again, scudding after H— through the narrow streets.

Streets? Heaven and earth! I wade through ruts and pools full of fœtid water, and scramble over broken-up pavements, massed into barricades, ready for repair. H—, who is agile, laughs at us women gathering up our skirts in his wake: not, as he observes, that he is maliciously leading us through bad places, and he points to many spacious houses and dignified patios to prove it; but that this is a sample of the condition of Seville.'

'Your Andalusian is lazy,' continues H—, himself a bright, prompt Englishman; 'also ill-paid. The municipality often pockets the money given by Government for repairs, and is perfectly indifferent, The streets have been thus since the memory of man. *Ergo*, it is good that they should remain so; changes are not approved.'

But why wealthy neighbours should not club together to have the mud and filth removed from before their doors is what I confess I cannot understand. I heard afterwards that a wealthy Hidalgo, living in a solemn-looking palace, in a breakneck street, with a deep fosse in the centre, upon such a plan being proposed to him, at the cost of a few *pesetas* a-year, replied that he did not see it. The street was the city's, not his, and that the city must repair it. So for generations more carriages will dangerously tilt, springs break, and limping horses hold on by their eyelids.

Round and round H— wound us like cotton on a reel, until we stood outside the city walls, if a line of ragged houses of various colours and sizes can be so alluded to.

Judge, therefore, if the mud was heavy in the town, what it was here! Two days of rain even at Madrid produces a quagmire requiring the most violent efforts of a host of scavengers to deal with; how much more at Seville, where no one concerns himself about anything at all?

Fortunately, from the handsome bridge of Triana there is a raised footpath, following a boulevard of scraggy trees, the Patio le las Damas, serving as a rampart against the floods. At no point is the city, lying lower than the bed of the river, more vulnerable than here. At this moment the Guadalquiver is sulky and swollen; troops of girls with flower-dressed hair and brightly coloured shawls have come down to stare at it, and little stalls are set with nuts, roasted chestnuts and figs on strings—an improvised fair, in fact, where crowds assemble, eyeing each other and the current, talking all the while, sitting or lolling, the men smoking, the children romping. It only wants the click of a castanet to set them all off hand-clapping and dancing. I dare say they will, later in the day; once begun, nothing stops them, turning and turning on the same spot like dancing dervishes. As song is to the Italian, so is dance to the Spaniard—intuitive.

Now we are on the Macarena, face to face with the grand old hospital of La Sangre de las Chinco Llagas; the Llagas treated ornamentally, like bunches of stone grapes upon the walls. Imagine six hundred feet of grim façade—shaded between brown and grey—and a lofty platuresque portal of the Ferdinand and Isabella time, niched in a lonely corner amongst grass and trees, like an ancestral palace out of town.

At this point the city walls begin in good earnest. Huge blocks of the same yellow stone as the cathedral, towered and turreted; some say as ancient as when Julius Cæsar held his famed command in Seville (Hispalis) in opposition to Pompey, who was supported by Cordova.

H— considers the walls Moorish, all except a curious barbican, close beside the road.

We pass the modern gate of Osario, once leading to a Moorish burial ground; also the spot where the Mumidian lions politely declined to devour St Justina and Rufina, those noble Christian *demoiselles*, so grandly depicted by Murillo in the Museo, done to death for laughing at the procession of the goddess 'Salambo' at Triana.

Things change little here except in name. Salambo has turned into the Virgin in the shape of a gigantic doll, carried about at Easter on a stretcher. (Let any modern Justina or Rufina laugh at her now at their peril!) The oxen carts creak by just the same, the roads are as muddy, and cows and heifers moo, and loose horses come straying in just as they did then, taking up all the space, and driving us ladies on boggy scraps of green.

We pass behind the hospital along a road fenced by aloes and cactus towards another ancient house, the asylum for lepers, among fat fields of cabbage and artichokes set among whispering canes. What was leprosy in the thirteenth century is *elephantiasis* now. Here the sufferers live at peace in quaint old chambers, a figure of St Lazarus outside to comfort them, in coloured *azulejo* tiles, his wounds licked by dogs, which the unscruplous artist has rendered so much resembling pigs, one fears a set purpose of insult towards so good a man.

Hard by is the city cemetery, a dismal enclosure, divided into deathfields by little open ditches; but as E— and I— are continually splashed by wheels bearing black and yellow coffins, locked up with keys, it seems in a fair way of repletion.

Resting ourselves inside on the steps of a monument, a man passes, carrying a small coffin. As a rule I object to gaze upon the dead, but now I cannot help it; the coffin is upright, and the front of glass. Within lies a lovely boy, some six years old (the pride of some desolate mother), waxlike, the dark eyebrows and eyelashes purple on the pale skin, an aureole of fair curls about the tiny head, the small hands crossed and filled with rosebuds. Crossed, yes! but on what? sheets of pink silver paper, and all about tinsel flowers. When there is no tomb, the clothes of the dead are burnt, not to tempt robbers.

While we linger, a cloaked figure strides in and passes up and down with a slow and measured tread, casting anxious glances. 'Don't look,' says H—, 'ten to one he has a dead boy under his cloak—one of his children, perhaps—and is too poor to purchase a coffin. He will watch his opportunity and cast it into an open grave. It is quite common to bury without coffins. The corpse is carried by a neighbour and thrown in anywhere. Children and babies are often hung up during the night at the gate of the cemetery,

in the hope that pious souls with *pesetas* will have them buried.'

Hard by the cemetery a stately old pile rises out of flat alluvial plain, the convent of San Geronimo, coated with terra cotta ornaments, mediæval fashion; once a royal fortress, where from a Moorish *mirador* Axataff, last Moorish King of Seville, gave a last look at Seville, ere he fled, riding along the road we had traversed for life and death; while victorious St Ferdinand, entering Seville by the opposite gate, received the keys of the city from prostrate Moslems, and hastened to plant his Christian banner on the walls.

By the Carmona gate and the Roman Aqueduct H— led us back to the city, to visit the Casa de Pilatos, belonging to the Duke of Medina Cœli, an orphan six years old, by death of his young father, killed by the exploding of a gun.

'Doubtless,' says H—, 'the Casa was originally the Moorish palace of some Emir or Alcalde, and Christianised by a Guzman. But it was a certain Don Enrique Ribera, returning to Seville from the Holy Land, who hit upon the idea of a *carte de visite* souvenir of Pilate's House.'

Outside it is modern, not to say absurd; a French window and a balcony, pointed out as the facsimile of the veritable casement where Christ was displayed to the Jews crowned with thorns as their King.

Then ridicule is silenced by the most amazing patio I ever beheld. I stood amazed, and I am so still in thinking of it.

Whether it be Gothic Arab or Saracenic Romanesque or mediæval, I cannot say; a strange medley of each, rather, toned down to an architectural magnificence which awes while it delights. All is marble; a double story of lofty arcades forming two exquisite galleries, held up by slender pillars, the capitals and pediments worked and fretted into circles of transparent lace-work; busts of Roman Emperors looking out of niches on inner walls; arabesque and diaper panellings of fruit and flowers on dado and over doors, and double clustered horse-shoe casements and broad cloisters sheeted with coloured tiles (*azulejo*), the invention of an African nation loving cleanliness and cool, first imported at Valencia, thence to Majorca—hence *majolica*, and so to Italy; the same types as at Urbino and Pesaro, only, as the Moslem religion forbade living forms, the Italian art was

perfected with a skill and beauty undreamt of in backward Spain.

It is easy to say *tiles,* and to call them *enamelled,* but how convey the faintest image of those intense shades baked centuries ago, or the caprice with which they are poised as a jeweller sets gems? Tiles with raised coatings of encaustic heraldry, formed by escutcheons of the royal castle, lion, bar, and tower, and that mysterious Nudo, which clasps Aragon with Spain (the Medina Cœli are not only allied to royalty, but are royalty itself, and look down on Bourbons as mere modern folk); tiles glorified beyond the nature of tiles to be, and entering the domains of true art and enchantment.

A fountain (a charming anachronism in a supposed Hebrew palace, supported by dolphins and crowned by a Janus), bubbles in the midst, while four statues mark the corners, togaed and draped just as they were found at Italica (you must remember you are in Pilate's house, and Pilate was a Roman).

Then through Moorish doors to darkly gorgeous antechambers, with deep-panelled cedar ceilings, light-arching casements, where orange and citron fling in their scented petals—to a sombre hall, mounted with eastern splendour, where Christ stood before Pilate.

As I enter, an indescribable horror seizes me—the gloomy shadows grow sinister, the whispering breeze forms in muttered oaths, the vague outline of Hebrew forms crowd about the daïs, and a pale face rises, thorn-crowned and smeared with blood.

Then through mosaic portals, into suites of mysterious chambers, lined with tiles, darkly resplendent; one special room looking into a tropical garden, like a glimpse of heaven.

Over a superb stair, which might accommodate a coach and six, rises an Eastern cupola, worked in mother-of-pearl and crystal; and so on by ancient carved corridors with low suggestive doors, to the window at which Peter sat when he denied his Lord.

Neither the live coals are there nor the Jewish maiden (H—, in the presence of his wife, regretted the maid deeply); but the Hebrew cock is present, carved in porcelain on the wall.

Always in the wake of H—, bounding along the slippery pavement, stick in hand, we arrive in the centre of an em-

barrassed little plaza, where four alleys meet, and are nearly annihilated by a long string of donkeys, assaulted by beggars, whom H— adjures in the name of God to remove themselves out of our way, and mocked at by a light brigade of boys for our general Englishness (a bonnet is English, and eminently absurd, and to talk anything but Spanish, contemptible and low).

At a corner, not altogether in the little plaza, but overlooking it one side—(observe this, because thereby hangs a tale)—H— points out a bust of Peter the Cruel, let into the wall; a round, regular-featured young face, much too comely for wickedness.

Long waves of rippling curls fall upon his neck, and a low pointed crown presses his youthful brow. One hand rests on the hilt of a sword, the other grasps a Gothic sceptre.

'Peter the Cruel,' says H—, 'is as much the *genius loci* of Seville as Haroun al Reschid was of Bagdad, only Don Pedro found no Scheriherizade to chronicle his deeds. Now about this *calle*, called Del Candilejo ("of the candle"), and that bust. It was Peter's habit, disguised and masked, to wander out at night to see for himself what was going on in the city—down by the wharf, in the Alameda, round the walls. Particularly he preferred to dive into these close and narrow streets, just as the Moors had left them.

'Now the story goes that in one of these midnight rambles he ran up against a cavalier who turned and struck him. Some say that he was a noted duellist, with whom Pedro had long desired to measure swords; others, that he did not run up against the King at all, but that Peter purposely attacked him. Anyhow,' says H—, inconvenienced by the long story he has undertaken to relate, 'swords were drawn and used freely. Neither would let the other go with his life, and both would sell their own dearly. At last, by a cunning lunge, Don Pedro ripped up his adversary, and laid him at his feet. Now, shortly before, the King had made a decree forbidding all fighting in the streets upon pain of death. What with love, revenge, jealousy, and robbery, so many men were killed, that there were not enough left to fight his many battles.

'What was to be done? There lay his adversary dead; and as the King gazed down upon his face, he remembered

that according to his own decree he had condemned himself to death. While he was wiping the blood from his sword an idea struck him, and he began to laugh. No one had seen the fight, no one could identify him. What an excellent occasion this would be of showing the carelessness of the Alcalde. If the Alcalde had done his duty and put guards about, such a thing could not have happened. Further, if the Alcalde could not discover him as the living man, he, Don Pedro, would have the pleasure of wringing off his neck.

'Altogether,' continues H— (while he is talking we have strolled on into the Alameda Vièja, and are sitting on a bench opposite Madame Ratazzi's house, and the old statue of Hercules), 'Don Pedro returned to the Alcazar in high good humour.'

'The first thing he did next morning was to summon the Alcalde. "Sir Alcalde," says he, leading him by the hand to a seat on his own divan, "I have called you to inquire whether any miscreant has dared to transgress my law against street fighting. In these unsettled times it is of the greatest importance that the King should be obeyed." "My lord," replied the Alcalde, not altogether reassured by the King's manner, too gracious to be sincere, "I am not aware that anyone has offended." "Ha! say you so, Sir Alcalde? Are you sure? For remember, if any fighting takes place within the city and the survivor escape, I shall hold you responsible for the blood that is shed."

'At this the Alcalde grew very grave. He was quite aware that Don Pedro would be as good as his word, and trembled lest some hidden motive was prompting him. Nor was he left long in doubt. Before he could reply a Moorish page entered, bearing a paper on a silver salver, which no sooner had the King glanced at than, starting to his feet, he swore a big oath.

'"What!" he cried, "while you, Alcalde, are come here to lie and cringe, a more faithful servant warns me that a dead body was found last night in the plaza behind Pilate's House." "Sire," is the reply, "if it be so, you have good reason to reproach me."

'"If!" cries the King, in a well simulated rage. "Do you dare to doubt me? Now, to teach you your duty, I

warn you that if the criminal is not found, you yourself shall be hung in his place, and I will be present. I give you three days, not an hour more."

'Picture to yourself,' continues H—, pausing to twist up a cigarette, at which he takes a couple of puffs, then throws it away, Spanish fashion, 'the feelings of the elderly Alcalde, a comfortable man with a wife and family. No sooner did he reach the Ayuntamiento than he found that a fight had really taken place, and a dead body been discovered. But, alas! no one could give him the slightest clue.

'An Alcalde,' says H—, 'was, and is, a man of power in the town, answering to our mayor. As such he commands resources. All these were put in requisition, but in vain. In vain he sent out Alzuazils and messengers into every street and alley on the other side of the Guadalquivir where the *gitanas* live, among the boatmen plying at the ferries, and down under the Roman Barbican and the riverside. In vain he begged and threatened, and even offered a fair jewel as a reward. No information came. No one had seen the fight. No one knew the survivor.

'At last, on the evening of the second day, when in sheer despair he had taken leave of his wife and children, and sent for his confessor, an old woman with a cracked voice, and looking for all the world like a witch, was shown into his presence, and astonished him by declaring that she could name the man.

'The feelings of the Alcalde may be better imagined than described, but what with his impatience and the breathless state of the old woman, it was some time before he could get her to explain.'

'At last she began. "I had just fastened my door and was going upstairs, for it was late, when I heard a great clatter of swords at the opening of a *calle*. As the night was dark and I could not see, I lit a bit of candle and looked out of a window, when I saw two men fighting. As one or both, says I, will be sure to want to be laid out tomorrow, I will make sure."

'"Go on," cried the Alcalde, pressing up to her nearer and nearer.

'"One," said the old woman, "had his back to me; the other was the King."

'"The King!"

'"Yes, my lord, and no other. He was in common clothes, and wore a mask; but when he had run his enemy through he took off his mask and stood wiping his sword. I could see him as plainly as I see you. In a terrible fright I blew out my candle, lest he should look up and kill me also; but he was too busy.

'"If I had not seen his face," continued the old woman, chuckling to herself, "I should have known him by the knocking of his knees. Everybody in Seville knows the noise the King makes when he walks, and how his joints crack."

'The old woman dismissed with profuse thanks and a liberal reward, the Alcalde could hardly contain himself till the next morning, when, as you may believe, he presented himself betimes at the Alcazar, arriving just as Don Pedro was taking his seat upon the marble bench under the oriental portal to administer open-air justice, like the Moors.

'When the King beckoned to him to approach, the Alcalde smiled. "Well, Sir Officer," says he, eyeing him all over with an evil smile, "have you found the man?" "Yes; and nothing is easier than for your Grace to meet him face to face," at which the Alcalde became so overwhelmed with mirth he had to turn away his face, not to laugh outright. Was the man mad? thought Don Pedro, or was he mocking him? Then a fit of passion seized him.

'"Villain," cried he, "you have found no one. You are shirking to save your life. Unless the real man is brought here—'

'"But, my Lord," broke in the Mayor, "if you know who the real man is, why do you command me to seek him?" To which shrewd question Don Pedro could find no reply; only,' said H—, 'as he hated the Alcalde before, he then and there resolved on the very next opportunity to cut off his head.

'"And now," said the Alcalde, looking the young King full in the face, "will my Lord permit me to take leave in order to make due preparation for the execution? I think you insisted on the third day—that is to-morrow. As you yourself will be present, all must be prepared with a care worthy the occasion."

'Then he called to him skilful Moorish artificers—for all

the delicate work at that time was done by the Moors—and caused them to construct during the night a life-sized figure, or dummy, dressed in the royal robes, to represent the King, a sword in one hand and a sceptre in the other.

'The next morning,' continues H—, rising and signing us to follow him, 'this figure was hung in the Plaza of San Francesco, Don Pedro himself being present, attended by all his Court. How he looked, or in what manner he explained so strange a proceeding, tradition does not say; but when the crowned dummy was hung and swinging in the air, the King called the Alcalde to him, and said, "Justice has been done—I am satisfied."

'Ever since that time, the spot where the King fought is called "the Calle de la Cabeza del Rey Don Pedro," and the narrow alley close by, where the old woman looked out, "the Calle del Candilejo;" while, that there might be no mistake as to what took place, the bust of Don Pedro, as he appeared as a dummy, was let into the wall, as you see it, as pleasant a young face as one would wish to see on a summer's day.'

We shall meet with Don Pedro again, but no story could be more characteristic than this one related by H—, and much appreciated by E— and myself, who were tired and glad to rest.

CHAPTER XII.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—COSAS DI SPAGNA.

National Dances—Death Etiquette.

I SHOULD never have thought it, had Captain D— not told me! Such a quiet, discreet looking city! Masked balls twice a-week, and gipsy *funciones* on Mondays and Thursdays!

Suddenly I remember that Seville is the abode of Don Juan and Figaro, the Sybaris of Iberia, and the home of the Improbæ Gaditanæ.

Now the national drama of Calderon and Lope de Vega may be dead; but the 'Gaditanæ' dances which delighted

Martial, Petronious, and Horace, and were they say danced before Tiberius at Capri, are still 'la Salsa de la Comedia'; the veritable 'Improbæ' still surviving as seguidillas and fandangos performed with the body, rather than with the feet—a sort of Oriental 'can-can,' exceedingly naughty, although qualified by Cervantes as 'a bounding of the soul, a quicksilver of the limbs.' (Yet I have seen young girls dance it without an idea of wrong before fathers and brothers.)

It is only the low people who snap fingers and twirl legs, a 'knocking of shoes,' as Sancho calls it, just as they did in the times of Strabo and Silius Italicus; also of the Iberian war-dance, performed, like the Scotch reel, armed, knocking also, only with swords.

When an Iberian warrior wanted to show contempt for a Roman knight, he retired 'dancing a derisive step,' a kind of 'Pyrrhica saltatio,' borrowed from the Phœnicians, and by them bequeathed to their Carthaginian progeny.

The Goths borrowed them from their African conquerors, and these naturally continued it in Spain—own cousin to the Oriental tam-tam, and known to us by the name of 'Morris,' or Moorisco dances, come in with sherry and Spanish queens.

There is one particular dance, mentioned by Ford as localised at Tarragona, the most Roman city in Spain, where men mount on each other's shoulders to represent the battle of the Titans ('Baile de los Titanes').

But to return to the Improbæ. Pliny's friend Claro ran after a Gaditana dancing-girl, just as the Andalusian fancy now engage in the same pursuit, crowding a certain music-hall in Seville (forbidden to ladies) to behold the antics of the mercenary fair,

The song, or *cana*, which accompanies it, begins with a plaintive 'Ahi!' and goes off into *taconeos* (feet beating) and a loud chorus at the end of each strophe, accompanied by the guitar.

Everyone plays the guitar in Andalusia. It seems to me as if it played itself—and the guitar is the latest edition of the Moorish zither. Just the sweep of the cords, and a tap or two on the sounding-board with the thumb (*golpeando*) to mark the time. The words coeval with the dance, and evidently Eastern. No melody—only a few notes, varied by long cries, to be heard alike in the vineyards of Tuscany, in

the sea-valleys of Sicily, or amongst the ruins on the banks of Nile. Melody, as we understand it, is of a later date, and was invented by the Italians.

Now the words, I find, are often improvised. I was at a people's theatre the other evening, when a clever actor struck off a strophe out of his head to a guitar, which so delighted the audience, he had to go on improvising seven more, which he, poor man, had not reckoned on, getting down at last so low in inspiration that he sang about the '*perros*' in the streets, and the Goverment tax on postage stamps; but he was clapped and applauded all the same.

Last night I witnessed an expurgated edition of the ancient 'Improbæ,' in a large hall called 'the School of Dancing.' A number of shabby people, ranged round the walls, and on a bench the lady performers in low dresses, short skirts, lace and spangles, with bows of every colour, stuck promiscuously at all available points. A guitar struck up, no tune, but just thrum-thrum; any lack of melody, however, made up for by a stout young man in a dark jacket, who furnished a kind of chant, swaying his body, stamping his feet, and tossing castanets in both hands with might and main. Then one lady (?), certainly not a *gitana*, and one gentleman, commenced a 'Bolero'; the man, tall and graceful, in the national costume; the female, like a fascinating snake, undulating round him, armed with mantilla and flounces.

Then a slip of a *criada* (girl) rose up and footed an 'Ole' to piano and violin. She *did* dance, that *criada*, and had a splendid pair of feet, a white pensive face and drooping eyelids, which recalled 'Mignon.' Nor could the ardent Italian, bounding before her lover among her eggs, have more deftly portrayed the potency of love than she; she writhed, she swayed, quivered, and languished, showing her shapely waist; finally, lying *couchant* on the floor, at the feet of her partner in an entrancing pose, with extended longing arms, and side-dropped head, calling down loud plaudits from the benches.

Then a little man got up and jumped incessantly in company with a girl, whom I might have praised had I not seen the *criada*.

This was an 'Ole de la Curra,' and if *curra* means jumping, they were certainly agile as monkeys.

The Cachucha with its pretty rhythm was performed by four, two stalwart Sevillanos and two fat ladies who stood before me, and stamped themselves up to my feet, throwing into my lap a handkerchief, which I was expected to return with money inside—a proceeding highly objected to by a couple of old maids from our hotel, who rose at once to go, but were detained by an expostulating brother and finally reseated themselves, blushing, in an attitude of high disdain.

All those who did not dance, ranged against the walls, assisted with castanets, swaying, kicking, and clapping, along with the shouting 'dark jacket,' by this time apopletic (even when he left off chanting for lack of voice, he swayed and stamped persistently).

Yet, with all this movement, the whole party were cold and solemn. The ladies threw their whole sentiment into their legs. Not a muscle of their faces moved, and the men were imperturbable. I saw many dances, Yotas, Gallegadas, Mormollares, and Seguidillas, the last danced by white 'Mignon,' with a fan, in the sweetest way, pursued by a young man dressed in pants—of course, ending in her total subjugation and surrender in another voluptuous pose, head and eyes turned upwards shaded by the fan.

Pursuit seemed to be the moral of the dances—pursuit and conquest; also displayed in 'La Malagueña y el Toro,' where the male invests himself in a red and gold mantle representing the Torero, and the lady is the Toro, promising well in the beginning but ending ill. The red cloak was too much for the dancer; he could not manage its folds. Always excepting Mignon, the men were much the most graceful, taking delightful flying leaps — especially Don Faustino Rodriques, in full matador costume, master of the ceremonies, and inviter to the *baile* by a printed card at the price of a dollar.

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From Spanish national dances I turn to a Spanish funeral —equally characteristic of the people and the place.

A death took place in the Calle Guzman el Bueno, opposite Mr Johnston's, banker and Vice-Consul. I knew it because I was obliged to leave my carriage at the corner when I visited them. It would have been bad form to drive into the narrow street with a corpse of quality lying near.

The moment the breath is out of a body, acquaintances and friends gather at the open doors, and shrill cries are heard. Later, special friends are admitted inside the room, 'para dar el pesame' (to pay condolences), and find the ladies of the family seated in a solemn circle, the condoling wife or mother shaking hands all round, and saying, 'A compaño a usted en su sentimento.' Not only do the friends go in, but they are expected to remain till late into the night, not speaking, only looking, the men in one room, the ladies in another.

Next day a sort of committee is formed of the male intimates, who, seated round a table, write out the funeral cards '*de faire part*,' smoking cigarettes the while, and discussing scandal and the last new ballet girl. Also printed notices appear everywhere on the street walls, with black borders, headed by a cross, and the words, 'Requiescat in pace,' setting forth that on such and such a day Don —— or Doña —— quitted this earthly tenement *munito* with the blessed sacrament (the priest always asks if the 'Sanctissimo' has passed), and that in such and such a church a funeral mass will be said for the repose of his soul.

Meanwhile, this particular corpse of the Calle Guzman el Bueno is invested in a frock-coat and trousers, white waistcoat and yellow gloves; the face powdered and painted, the hair crimped and curled, orders and jewels (if any) placed on dress and neck. (Queen Mercedes was buried dressed as a bride, in lace and orange-flowers, a diamond circlet on her brow.) New shoes are indispensable, and being often sold after the corpse is divested of its bravery, there is no bitterer reproach among the poor than to say, 'He wears dead men's shoes.' Then the body is laid in the principal saloon, the patio gate flung open, and all who care walk in and stare, proceeding one by one in Indian file—relatives of necessity, the public if they please. A ghastly sight, enough to turn you sick; while all the furniture of the death-room is being carried down into the patio, where it lies about, Spanish fashion, anyhow, as at a sale.

(The furniture is removed for two reasons: to prevent infection, be the malady what it may, and to avoid all that can recall the memory of the deceased.)

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When the funeral procession sets forth (the coffins are, as I have said, blue, lilac, and white for the young, black and gold for older persons, and much ornamented), the carriages of all concerned follow, but no member of the family, male or female. These stay at home with the bereaved lady, seated in dignified state, to receive condolences—a kind of funereal 'Tertullia,' repeated for nine days. Afterwards, the family retire to the country, into private life, in the sense of the most rigid mourning, even the gentlemen neither receiving nor paying visits for a most unreasonable period.

CHAPTER XIII.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—THE CATHEDRAL.

A Unique Church—The Capilla Real—Tomb of Ferdinand—At Sunset—Advent Rites—Dancing before the Altar—The Puerto del Sol—The Giralda.

'LET us build such a church that people shall call us mad,' said the Sevillian Chapter after St Ferdinand's conquest. And so they did, and called it Grandeza, to distinguish it from Leon, Eleganza, and Toledo, Riqueza. As to the Cathedral of Cordova, that has always been called La Mezquita.

But this ostentatious Chapter, thinking rather of size than of form, built upon the square foundations of the Mosque of Abu Yusuf al Mansur, an absolute anomaly for a church, designed more or less to prefigure the cross upon which Christ died. To me it all came with a sense of solemn mystery; colossal vaults, arches so high I could not see the key-stone; clustered pillars too fragile to bear the weight, but in reality as thick as towers. Five naves, each big enough to hold a town; ninety-three windows, in the centre a marble plain, like a hippodrome, and the high altar backed by a carved retablo of burnished gold in forty-four compartments; each with groups of painted figures, life size, the whole two hundred feet in height; a Pascal candle as tall as a ship's mast; the exquisitely wrought candelabra that bears it, a monument in bronze; two organs, a universe of pipes; and the Coro, as an island in a deep marble sea.

Yet it is a poetic immensity, a suave splendour, revealed to you soft and hushed as heavenly presences; and tempered to the capacity of poor humanity by the half light; so that the astonished sense sinks not bewildered.

Behind the altar, shrouded in constant gloom, is the Capilla Real entered by golden gates; a church within a church, with its own dignitaries, priests and revenues. Here, under a richly encrusted dome, and well-shaped vault over the altar, lies Saint Ferdinand in a crystal coffin (he was sainted because he carried on his own kingly back the wood to burn infidels and Moors) dressed in a coat of mail. Upon his head a pointed crown, and wrapped about his loins the royal mantle; on one side the sword with which he fought his way into Toledo and Seville against the Moors, on the other, the *baton* of command.

On the anniversary of his conquest the troops in Seville march in and lower the colours, each soldier bearing a lighted torch. Once it was a hundred Moors who bore torches round the royal bier, sent by the Caliph of Grenada in token of submission. Could any conqueror wish for more?

Over the altar, on a silver throne, embossed with the royal arms, sits the Virgin de los Reyes, given to Ferdinand by St Louis; a small mediæval figure with a glistening gown, hair spun in gold, and shoes worked with Gallic lilies, and the word 'Amor.' This was his special virgin, and carried always on his saddle-bow.

In the Capilla Real also lie entombed Alonzo el Sabio, of Castille, and Beatrice his Queen, under draperies of gold tissue, their crowns and sceptres tossed, as it were, beside them on enamelled cushions, and Maria de Padilla, Peter the Cruel's beautiful mistress, some say his wife.

How often have I wandered spell-bound about the nave, and tried to gather those ever-crossing aisles into any known form, gazed upon the wondrous groining of the roof, wrought into richest knots and arabesques as it approaches the altar; tried to scan the proportion of the mysterious chapels sunk deep into the walls, and measure the height of Murillo's picture of St Antonio (from which the figure of the saint was so cunningly cut out), where the angelic hosts came floating down around the infant Christ, throned upon roseate clouds; the kneeling saint bending his head forward in ecstatic joy!

To the last the Cathedral of Seville was to me a myth, about which I could never reason—a thing apart—too sacred to investigate or to understand.

The hour to visit it is at the Ave Maria, when the sun is low and its rays tremble on the walls in irises of gold,—when great painted windows stand out in a pale light, alive with venerable forms of lawgivers, prophets, and kings; the delicate curves of the arches melt into dim lines, and rays of yellow light pierce in like arrows upon a burnished ground. Then the sculptured saints seem to take form and live, the flying pipes of the organs to glitter like angels' wings; the statues on the choir to murmur in a strange tongue; the many pictures which line the lower walls—Murillo, Vargas, and Morales—to grow terrible in the half light; the sculptured forms of archbishops long laid to rest in the repose of pointed shrines, beside which deacons keep watch with silver croziers, to move; and from the boundless gloom, aloft to fretted roofs, a burst of sound sweeps like an earthquake round, harmonious thunders roll, and deep-mouthed pipes speak with deafening shout; the giant organs (for there are two) replying to each other as in a dialogue of Titans; the *vox humana* exquisitely sweet, the rattle of triumphant drums, the shrill bray of trumpets, the clash and clamour as of a battlefield.

Then the loud anthem ceases as suddenly as it began. The old ebony clock ticks out again from its dark frame. The dull drone of chanting priests uprises from the choir, and silent worshippers creep in and kneel.

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The season is Advent. I enter the Cathedral from the sunset, on the Delicias, gold and ruby bars blending into fields of tender lemon-coloured light, and plunge into what seems absolute night.

At first I see nothing but Cyclopean walls, indefinite as to height, and elephantine ruggednesses which might be rocks or ruins upon a far-off shore, or the deep mazes of a midnight wood, where giant trees grow white under the moon.

Backgrounds of darkness—no light. Here and there a torch lost in the distance of a vaulted tomb sunk in architectural folds, or a lighted cresset hanging in mid-air; uncertain beacons multiplying space. Led by the hand by H—, who knows the place, I advance cautiously, when,

turning the corner of a clustered column, I am absorbed into the resplendence of the high altar, the colossal retablo all aglow with its four hundred and forty-four compartments one sheet of flame, the Virgin looking down in a blue robe, her jewelled crown shining like a star.

I know nothing, being still dazed with the splendour and the gloom of the stupendous masses, and the waves of light, when a low chanting from the opposite choir and murmurings around the golden gates of the high altar awake me to the sense that I am standing in the midst of a multitude of figures postrate upon the floor. Then comes a joyous burst from invisible instruments, rushing through the aisles as though it were a tangible power, and would bring down the roof.

The background is so grand, the gloom so absolute, the solemn consciousness of worship to a God invisible as His temple so overwhelming, that I feel my heart give one leap, then rush out, part as it were, of that harmonious flood of sound flowing towards the Infinite.

By this time I have accustomed myself to the light in the central place before the altar, and the presence of a countless throng, with gliding forms between filling up empty spaces. As the organs cease, the rustle of many footsteps in the choir announce that a procession is forming. Shapes brush by along the railed space separating the choir from the altar, two and two. Shapes! Silhouettes rather, of richly robed priests and canons with mitred heads passing the gates; and oh! what gates they are!

We sing of Jerusalem and her golden doors, but what can compare with these *rejas sublimes*, and the glittering splendour of the burnished bars?

Upon the altar are spread the famous relics—a silver monstrance dish, studded with twelve hundred gems, a Gothic cross worn by King Roderick, a golden censer of Alonzo the Wise, a cross made from the first gold brought by Columbus, a rock-crystal cup used by St Ferdinand, the keys of Seville presented to him by the Moors when the city surrendered, specially a silver one given by Axalaf, the last African King, besides bones, heads, fingers, and limbs of Saints.

On the open space before the Host—the Virgin and Christ overhead, with St Ferdinand beyond in his own royal

seat—the Archbishop and the Chapter take their place on either side on benches.

And now a new wonder. To the left, within the bars, I am conscious of the presence of a band of stringed instruments, not only violins and counter-bass, but flutes, flageolets, and hautboys, even a serpent, as they call a quaint instrument associated with my earliest years, forthwith all beginning to play in the most ancient and most homely way—for all the world like a simple village choir, bringing a twang of damp, mouldy country churches to my mind, sunny English afternoons, and odours of lavender and southernwood.

As they play—these skilled musicians—a sound of youthful voices comes gathering in fresh, shrill, and childlike, rising and falling to rhythm.

All at once the music grows strangely passionate, the voices and the stringed instruments seem to heave and sigh in tender accents, long-drawn notes and sobs wail out melodious, cries for mercy and invocations for pardon,—growing louder and intenser each moment.

Then, I know not how, for the great darkness gathers round even to the gates of the altar—a band of boys, the owners of the voices, appear as in a vision in the open space between the benches on which the Chapter sits, and gliding down the altar steps, move in a measure fitting in softly with the music.

How or when they begin to dance, singing as if to the involuntary movement of their feet, I know not; at first, 'high disposedly,' their bodies swaying to and fro to the murmur of the band, which never leaves off playing a single instant, in the most heavenly way. Then, as the music quickens and castanets click out, the boys grow animated and move swifter to and fro, raising their arms in curves and graceful interlacing rounds. Still faster the music beats, and faster and faster they move, crossing and re-crossing in mazy figures, the stringed instruments following them with zeal—the castanets, hautboys, and flutes—their interlacing forms knotting in a kind of ecstasy, yet all as grave and solemn as in a song of praise, a visible rejoicing of the soul at Christmas time and the Divine birth. As David danced before the Ark for joy, so do these boys dance now with holy gladness.

I made out something of their costume—broad Spanish hats turned up with a *panache* of blue feathers—the Virgin's colour—a flowing mantle of the same hue over one shoulder glittering in the light, white satin vests, and white hose and shoes.

The dance is most ancient, *archi-old*, as one may say—of an origin Phœnician or Arab, sanctified to Christian use. The music, like the dance, quaint and pathetic, with every now and then a solo so sweet as if an angel had come down unseen to play it. The slow movement, clearly a minuet in measure and graceful curves, the quicker step (and tune and dance, as I have said, faithfully echo each other, as show to substance) as clearly a gavotte. Now we know that the minuet and the gavotte came to us from the Court of France in the chivalric times of Valois kings. The Court of France as clearly borrowed them from Spanish queens—these queens from Eastern dances acquired from the Moors. Moorish dances are, as I have said, executed in Seville to this day. Like the almeh in Egypt, the nautch in India, they are dances of gesture and undulation more than of steps. Thus with these boys, we find ourselves face to face with a rite older than history, as old as Time itself.

And so they danced and sung; by turns slow, then quick, mingling themselves with the melody, with ever and anon pauses of most eloquent silence, until the great Giralda bell crashed out in its balustraded gallery overhead —Santa Maria, La Gorda, John the Baptist or Herod (each bell is baptised and has its name); Herod, most likely to-day, as the slayer of the innocents, and he is the biggest and the loudest bell. Then the sweet band ceases, the voices hush, the boys vanish as they had come, impalpable; the torches are extinguished one by one, the cressets quenched, and folds of darkness gathered on the walls.

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I have inquired on all hands what is the origin of this singular rite, which takes place twice a-year, at Advent and Easter, but no one can tell me. About two centuries ago an Archbishop of Seville (he must have been a most obnoxious person) objected to the dance as giddy and mundane, and forbad it in his cathedral, causing a terrible scandal. The Sevillians were enraged. Their fathers had

had the dance, and their fathers before them, and they were ready to defend it with swords and staves. As the Archbishop was inexorable, an appeal was made to Rome. The Pope of that day, a sensible man, replied that he could give no judgment without seeing the dance himself; so the whole troop, stringed instruments, castanets, serpent, cavalier hats and cloaks, and the boys who wore them, were carried off to Rome at the expense of rich citizens. There the measure was tried before the Pope in the Vatican, and he approved (how could a sensible Pope do otherwise? We pray, why not praise? As Christ was born a human child, so these are children rejoicing over Him according to their years).

'Let the citizens of Seville have their dance,' the Pope said; 'I see no harm in it. As long as the clothes last it shall continue.'

Need I add that those clothes never wore out, but like the widow's cruse renewed themselves miraculously, to the delight of the town, and that they will continue to last fresh and new as long as the gigantic walls of La Grandeza uprear themselves, and the sun of Andalusia shines on the flat plains!

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In my enthusiasm for the Cathedral, I am forgetting the Puerta del Sol—a lovely Arab gateway breaking the turreted walls which shut it in, with points like jewels, buried in fine diaper work and cabalistic tracings.

How strangely solemn are the huge bronze doors, green coloured and fretted with huge nails, and the solid bolts just as the Moors left them when driven out by Ferdinand, and so sure of returning that they took the keys with them to Morocco. And the beautiful Court of Oranges within, the tall trees heavy with yellow fruit, an ancient marble basin in the midst, bubbling before the Gothic walls of the Cathedral, and high aloft that fantasy in stone, the roseate Giralda—panelled in sheets of lace work (*ajaracas*), a tower so light and airy it might be built of gossamer, save for the ceaseless *carillion* of bells, throbbing like pulses.

Oh that I could sweep away these too solid Gothic precincts—heavy pediments, flamboyant arches, 'flying' buttresses, hanging heavy in air, cumbrous wrought parapets

and towers, solid as citadels—and behold the mosque of Abu Yusuf as it stood hemmed in by Arab walls! Imauns and dervishes sitting in the deep shade of glistening orange-trees, on stone benches running round; and turbaned berbers and white-robed sheiks waiting their turn to purify themselves in the fountain before kneeling before the Mishrab; the meridian sun playing upon their striped garments, and catching the rich shades of Eastern carpets, while the shrill voice of the muezzin sounds from the sculptured galleries of the Giralda, calling on Allah, coveys of sacred pigeons circling round his head.

Or earlier still, when 'Grandeza' was not even a mosque, but a temple dedicated to the Phœnician Astarte, in the form of Salambo, loved by a serpent—a dusky goddess, with black hair and limbs, chalcedonies in her eyes, and on her bosom ropes of amulets and shells, to be borne on a *paso* (platform) by the noblest ladies, the people following and wailing Adonis's death. Thus passing to the river bank, and to Triana, where two stalwart Christian damsels, Rufina and Justina, selling earthen jars and vases (*cacharros*), just as they do now in little shops wedged into the walls, met the procession, and mocked at Salambo for a dingy idol, and jeered the mourning crowd, at which the noble ladies, much alarmed, dropped the *paso* and ran away, giving Murillo the occasion to render the Christian maidens immortal in after years, and strangers to Seville the sight of the spot where the lions would *not* devour them.

CHAPTER XIV.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.

A Ball at the Marquesa's.

THE Marquesa G— is a great lady, and gave a ball—a very pretty ball—on Thursday night, emphatically lively, and full of local character. Not that there was no shortcomings, if you come to speak of the ball proper, as contradistinguished

to the 'tertulia,' or *soirée dansante.* The house, for instance, though large, is low-roofed and narrow-roomed; the ball-room, a kind of gallery utterly inadequate for such an entertainment. There was too little light from candles, and no attempt whatever at ventilation. Still, it was gay and full of life, leaving an impression on the mind as of absolute enjoyment.

'Now, I must premise my social remarks by explaining that I live much in Italy, and am accustomed to the stateliness of the receptions in those grand old Roman palaces, so that I may not be altogether a fair judge; but it did seem to me that I never beheld a collection of exceedingly high-born and high-bred people assembled together with a more genuine determination to enjoy themselves. There was a freshness about it all quite intoxicating to the unaccustomed mind. Party after party came in, all smiles; were received ditto, and continued smiling through the entire evening. *Now*, I can understand the charm of Spanish women. It is their grace and *naïvete*, their innocent *abandon* and childlike mirthfulness. Delightful peals of silvery laughter ran from side to side, fascinating little dimples formed on rosiest lips; bewitching head-turnings and other diabolically seductive little ways distracted one—all evidence of downright high spirits and harmless glee.

No use to describe all this; it must be seen to be appreciated. Like the Eastern dances they have here, *it is all in the manner* of it. There are so many ways of producing the same effect. Now, this particular effect is simply rapturous.

'I wonder,' said I to a Guzman, descended from the great El Bueno of Medina Sidonia, 'you ever marry out of Spain.'

'One likes change,' was the reply.

'Alas! for the national taste!'

I confess that I have not found that supreme beauty I am looking for; but instead, I behold such a galaxy of bewitching faces, such large bright eyes, symmetrical forms exquisitely tailored, and such lovely heads of hair, I end by thinking it must be what the Turks look for when they die, in the everlasting gardens of the blest.

An atmosphere is more than an accident Here it is, an atmosphere of beauty, which hems you in like a gold mist or a sun blaze.

How they did talk, the sweet creatures! Trust Spanish woman for *that!* Never did I hear the like! Although it was a regular ball, these charmers, intent on having 'a good time,' actually *forgot to dance!*

Talk, talk, talk, talk, in all voices, in all tones; young, old, and medium, going on at it like cherry-clappers—if a cherry-clapper can be transmogrified into a fascinating, deep-eyed Andalouz.

'No, I don't include the men. Honestly, they are plain—many downright ugly—and lean, in the Don Quixote style. Neither do I include my Guzman, who has an historic face, nor the Captain-General, with a clear colourless brow, and such eyes! Such as I figure to myself the Cid, in his coroneted helmet—and, oh dear, can a man have a manner like a majestic queen?—if so, the Captain-General has it.

Supreme good-breeding everywhere, and an unconscious forgetfulness of self, which marks the Spaniard all the world over, let the other be who he may. You have only to speak with them to feel it.

I was charmed, too, with my host, the Marquess, a stout old gentleman, who out of his palace might be anything you please, saying to me in broken English, he hoped I should '*practicate*' his house as often as I pleased!

This is the only invitation you ever receive in Seville. Let the noble lady, who does the honours so well, give drum, rout, or fancy ball, nothing is announced but the day. Once made free of the house, it is for ever; your only misdemeanour, not to appear.

Not a costly hospitality, for no refreshments are needed. Not even the traditional Italian water-ice and sour lemonade. Six glasses of water I have seen solemnly grouped on a silver platter, flanked by round rolls of sugar, *pour tout de bon*, of which nourishing refection I was gravely invited to partake by the master.

To-night there *was* a faint attempt at supper, dry cakes and drier biscuits, each dish repeating its contents, as though too precious to vary; amazingly dry food. Got a bonbon or a confiture, and all the lovely dried fruits, figs, plums, and peaches lying close by in the shops, besides excellent pastry. Water there was *à discretion.* (Spaniards of all classes are enormous water drinkers. No sooner do you enter Spain

than you hear them crying out in piteous voices from the railway cars, *Agua*, *Agua*, for all the world like thirsty chickens.)

Solemnly we sat round a room on forms, discussing the dull food; the *caballeros* providing the arcadian drink plentifully, and everyone got so merry on it! Not the finest brands of Moet or Veuve Cliquot could have excited more musical laughter from snowy throats, nor a mightier coruscation of sparkling eyes turned upon happy waiters; delicate little screams out of corners, and half-muffled cries.

Then couple after couple strolled out (filled to repletion, apparently, on the primitive food), the girl with the red satin jacket and *chiffonne* face, low fringe of fair hair, and such a gamut of expression! Her sister in the black jacket, not so stunning to the uninitiated sense, but very seductive—all hair, and lace, and white neck (no one was absolutely *décolletée*)—the chivalrous Captain-General with an enticing little blonde, a fluff of amber curls, blue eyes, and general rapturousness, and a tall lady carrying herself like a Juno, a scaly diamond serpent gleaming on her breast, as who would say, 'Anguis in herbâ latet,' a charitable warning in presence of such charms.

A fair one from Madrid, whom I will call Isabel the Catholic, a luscious blonde, always an excellent thing in Spain, with a coronet of brilliants and a brocaded robe; a luxuriant Murcian dame, in powder and blue satin, with cheeks like ripe peaches, and daggers rather than eyes, into which you might gaze and gaze, and still measure mysterious depths. Indeed, I rarely got below the eyes. There my gaze rested! I can give you but a faint idea of the features, only that they harmonised with the eyes. Sometimes, all the same, I do get a glimpse of fairy feet, and the sweetest way of using them.

Thus they all dawdled and talked, talked and dawdled, as if time were not, for four mortal hours.

When I went away, they were still hard at it; I mean talking, not dancing, and they may be at it still to this moment of writing, for what I know. Had you seen them as I did, you would deem nothing more likely.

CHAPTER XV.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—THE BARBER AND THE DON.

A New Version of an Old Play—Figaro's House—Figaro and Rosina a Modern Dress—Don Juan's House—Seville in the Days of King Pedro—The Don's Two Warnings—La Caridad.

YOU must often have seen on the stage of second-class theatres (I have scores of times in Italy) Rossini's opera of 'The Barber of Seville.'

'First act, first scene, a street in Seville by moonlight,' Hidalgos singing in chorus in front of low house fronts (one is Don Bartolo's), and a side view of an alley with projecting balconies; no windows to speak of, and one lamp (I am particular as to the lamp). Now I had always put down these limited properties in my own mind, specially the *one lamp*, to the poverty of the *mise en scène*. Not at all. Such are the streets of Seville to this day.

As I walked about at night, I was for a long time haunted by incoherent visions of something I have seen elsewhere. By heavens! it was the set-scene in the opera. (I say nothing of the rough stones which hurt my feet, and the broken-up pavement, not represented on the stage; and the fetid holes into which wheels sink to the axle, because—a dash of sapphire sky at the end of the foul alley keeps you in good-humour, and at night the moon is so lovely, and the stars so near, that if you do not, like the philosopher in the fable, fall into a hole, you cannot but be happy.)

Then from the streets I began to look for the singers; my old friends, Figaro, Count Almaviva, Rosina, Don Juan and Zerlina—by night, when the one lamp is lighted (of gas, I regret to say), or perhaps two lamps, one in the alley, the other at the corner, and life and love, music and castanets, abound.

As to the singing serenaders, and the fine voice of Almaviva, emerging from a draped figure in dramatic folds, that is all nonsense.

Whatever they did in Figaro's time, it would make a scandal now. Serenades in our days are restricted to minis-

ters and democrats. When you hear them, you may be sure such are on their travels.

Also, it is out of place to speak across the street from casement to casement; that also would offend public morals and the Sereno, both stern—specially the Sereno, with his iron spike.

But there is a way.

Going to an English tea, in company with H— and his wife, I came upon a deeply mantled figure, leaning against a house wall. As he was motionless, I looked again. By Jove! it was Count Amalviva. I could not see his face, but a dark sombrero, crushed on his brow (he had left his plume at home), and his attitude and dramatic folds were unmistakable.

I say the Count leaned against the wall, but the wall held a window latticed with cross bars, on the ground floor; and motionless as he seemed, I perceived that he whispered into it (kissing the iron they call it here), and that as he whispered, he pressed his arm amorously against the bars, as though they were his mistress's waist.

(I have no doubt but that under the sober cloak of common life he was attired in velvet and embroidery and lace, only I did not see it.)

Would you believe it? On our return from the tea, three hours later, the lovers had not stirred: no, not an inch—only the moon had shifted, and we could see his swarthy face and glistening eyes. He knew he was quite safe; no one passed that way at night; no carriages, no eavesdroppers. We clung discreetly to the opposite wall, in the deepest shadow, and as we passed, faint sounds of murmured love came to us on the breeze, but we heard no words.

Figaro still lives in his own ramshackle little house, made up of excrescences and corners, in the Plaza San Tomas, near the Cathedral; in front, some trees; behind, the solid palace of the Lonja, or India House, with sculptured portals and renaissance courts, overtopped by the stone peaks and flying buttresses of the Cathedral, the fairy-like Giralda, high in air.

Everyone knows Figaro's house—all the guides point it out to you; besides, you pass it every day, going to the *one* promenade of Seville, Las Delicias by the Guadalquivir. A

little *mercèria* now occupies the barber's shop, where the *oi polloi* buy tape and buttons of Figaro's handsome wife, Susanna, a matron now, but with remains of that beauty which once charmed Count Almaviva.

I do not think she could change dresses now with any mistress in any set garden-scene, however darkened; not so spotless either now as to reputation as in those merry days when she served the Countess, worried Figaro, and hid Cherubino behind a screen.

Cherubino is now a married man, with a small family; a music-master, they tell me, teaching other youths to sing '*Voi che sapete*' in various keys. Figaro himself is out upon his rounds, shaving beards, puffing powder in old men's faces, and dressing ladies' heads.

He still talks, ah me! like a whirlwind. From the time he enters, pulling out his combs and crimping irons, he never ceases.

'Permit me, madam. I have not an instant. The Alcalde's wife—Donna Julia de Solis—and a dozen ladies waiting. You have a spot upon your cheek—allow me to remove it. A fly! Bestimina. Were you at the Marquesa's ball? She wore a *jardinière* of roses—a faded rosebud, truly! These nobles think they last for ever. Don Juan's garden-party is to-morrow; Leporello wrote all the invitations, for the Don had hurt his hand in a duel. I hear Zerlina is planted. Masetto has shut her up in the mountains. "Something left behind," Masetto says, "at Seville, he cannot find." Ha! ha! I should think so! Let him ask Don Juan for it if he dares! (Just a tiny curl here, allow me.) Donna Elvira was in hysterics last night, threatened to stab herself with a gold bodkin, and Don Juan, they say, grows vicious—if so, he cannot stand for a deputy. There is a story of a statue coming to sup with him, but no one but Leporello knows the rights of it. (Did I prick you? Excuse me, the diamond must go so; the drop just over the ear.) In my young days I used to ask "Why our nobles gave themselves the pain to live?" Now they are so fallen, I see no harm in it. By the way, his excellency Count Almaviva is ruined. The bailiffs are in his house. All to be sold up. To much baccarat and supper parties. The countess, who is rich, will not pay his

debts. He is too profligate. I shall have the pleasure of shaving his lordship in prison. Ah me! how he used to plague me about Susanna; I owe him many a grudge.'

Seville could not do without Figaro, nor Figaro without Seville. His fame will last as long as the Barbican of Cæsar. But I regret to say he no longer wears his short velvet jacket, hung about with silver tags and ribbons, high clocked stockings, light shoes, or that enticing Majo hat, with little bobs all round it. It is quite touching to see Figaro's neglected hat and well-worn cloak. *Sic transit gloria mundi.* If all the tenors who have made a fortune with 'Figaro qui!' and 'Figaro là!' gave him but one penny, he would live in a palace and be served on gold.

. . . . . .

I have just seen Rosina; I found her in a patio, Moorish all over, with slender columns upholding gilded capitals, inner windows all gilded too. A fountain casting up a single spray among banks of roses and vines trailing from side to side, making a floral ceiling, under which the family live among sofas and divans, pianos and guitars, in a delicious picnic. Some one put up a painted screen before the open door; but why hide nature's picture? Lights gleaming among palms, bright eyes and hair, the graceful turn of lissome limbs and tiny slippered feet?

A pretty framework to a pretty head; sometimes Rosina wears a white rose, sometimes a red, according to her humour, this makes her so *piquante.*

No short dress reaching to the knees adorns her now, or rows of black lace flounces; no flowing mantilla lends her head an Eastern grace, nor are her well-formed shoulders exposed to view as at the opera; but she has still sweeping eyelashes and ruddy lips, plants a high comb on one side of her head bewitchingly, twirls a fan, and comes and goes on the sweetest pair of feet. Light as she is, however, she is inclined, just a little—to roundness, most appetising now, but which, by-and-by, may expand into buxomness.

Whether Rosina prefers a wealthy Russian Baron, as old as Don Bartolo (who lodges in the house in the best suite of rooms, and has Figaro to dress his wig and gum his moustaches), or a tall Catalan, called Lopez, who hovers about the patio like a ghost, is uncertain.

Perhaps she loves both. That is quite possible in easy-going Seville, and a ready way out of difficulties. I have come on her in corners, running her light legs off, the Baron after her; a diamond arrow at her neck, and earrings which I am sure the tall man Lopez never gave her.

Then there was the little minx next day in the patio, half hid by a banana tree, gazing into the fountain, Lopez beside her, looking into her eyes. No doubt she had consoled him with a little *billet-doux*, shaped like a cocked hat (they sell them with initials in the Calle Sierpes), snatched from her white breast and presented by tantalising fingers at her back.

I doubt if Rosina blushes, but there are moments when her whole face flashes like a flame, and her lips take tender folds. If for the Baron I cannot say, or whether Rosina's *brune* charms are sufficient to make him take *le grand saut* and offer her marriage, or whether she gives her heart freely to Lopez, a comely youth with sympathetic eyes.

I shall be able to judge at the Carnival. At all events, the tall man's peace of mind is gone, and the Baron talks of settling in Seville.

A stone's-throw off is Don Juan's house—I mean Mozart's Don Juan—of the bluest blood in Spain, and bearing for his arms a Moorish king's head, proper, impailed—standing in a lonely street, no longer a thoroughfare; a house with quaint projecting attic windows, iron-barred, under rows of Saracenic arches, shrunk up now as it were with age and feebleness, but still present to witness to its identity.

But not so in Don Juan's time; a low door gave access to many a rollicking guest and many a fair Sevillana, concealed in mask and domino, at which Doña Elvira cried and wiped her eyes, prophesying how it would all end, while Leporello cleans boots and burnishes his master's weapons.

Don Juan must have had a bad time of it with a shrew like Elvira for his wife (he turned her out once, and no wonder) in so small a house. It was not convenient that she should watch Doña Anna in the street, and made it difficult to rendezvous with Zerlina in the Alcazar Garden. I never go in there but the air of 'La ci darem' follows me. I see Masetto, an honest Castilian peasant, with breeches and silver buttons, working in the orange-grounds, and I

know the very spot where the little cheat Zerlina sang 'Batti Batti,' kissed him, and made friends.

All this is very clear; but that the Don gave supper parties, and invited the Commendatore from his pedestal in the neighbouring plaza, is simply impossible. His marble guest, like Samson, would have carried off the roof, and buried the wicked Don without flames or sulphur.

Don Juan, for his sins, lived in the evil days of Peter the Cruel, when no man's life was worth an hour's purchase. The whole city, desperate with the tyranny of the King, fell into excesses, spending their days in banquets and revels; the very priests living like gallants, the nuns trailing long gowns, and the nobles being all that Figaro says of them. Who cared for religion? Merry-makings were held in the churches, and men got drunk and danced upon the graves, much to Don Juan's delight, who laughed at spectres, and footed it to a rattling music of drums and fifes, hollow among the tombs.

From dancing the citizens got to fighting—the Guzman against the Nuñez, the Bermudez against the Alvas. The houses were barricaded; the feudal towers turned into forts; the latticed windows into loopholes for pikes and arrows; the black crosses in the plaza smeared with blood, and the pavement strewn with corpses. An evil time, in which Don Juan was always a leader, cutting down his enemies like dogs, his man Leporello watching from a safe corner. Indeed, it was in one of these city brawls that the Don crossed swords with the Commendatore, spifflicating that worthy gentleman (so wrath about his attentions to his daughter, Doña Anna, engaged to that tenor-nonentity, Don Ottavio) in a duel which ended in his death.

To be sure, the Don, as his wife said, had many warnings. One night, as he came home through the silent streets masked, like his friend King Pedro, passing by the Plaza de San Francisco, he saw a light in a house opposite the Ayuntamiento (the first floor still remains, all windows), and a silken ladder placed most invitingly on the pavement,

'By Santiago! A public tryst,' says the Don. 'Who is the fair one who thus openly hangs out the sign?'

Then he falls into a deep cogitation as to the owner of the house. Leporello keeps a list of all the ladies in Seville, and

all the peasants, too, who are good-looking; but for the life of him Don Juan cannot remember that anyone lives here worth recalling.

'Meanwhile, here goes!' says he; 'Goddess or Devil, so it is a woman it is the same to me,' and he vaults on to the rounds of the silken ladder and reaches the *mirador* (balcony).

Within he pauses. All is dark. Somehow the abundant moonshine outside does not penetrate into the room. To see clearly he must remove his mask; then from an inner chamber he discerns the glimmer of a taper. Drawing his sword, he rushes forward, and finds himself before a couch closely shrouded. With haste he withdraws the draperies, and beholds a lady sleeping. Stooping to observe her more closely, with a beating heart he removes a lace veil which covers her, and his eyes fix themselves on the hideous countenance of a corpse festering in a shroud!

This was his first warning.

Later, returning at midnight from a revel given by some gallants, in the now ancient quarter of the Macarena, Don Juan falls in with a funeral procession with torches and banners. Some grandee of high degree, doubtless, there are so many muffled figures, mutes carrying silver horns, the insignia of knighthood borne upon shields, a saddled horse led by a shadowy page, and the dim forms of priests and monks chanting death dirges.

Don Juan can recall no death at Court or among the nobles, and this is plainly a corpse of quality. Nor can he explain the midnight burial, a thing unknown except in warfare or in time of plague; so, advancing from the dark gateway where he had stood to let the procession pass, he addresses himself to one of the muffled figures, and asks whose body they are carrying to the Osario at this time of night?

'Don Juan de Mañara,' is the answer; 'a great noble. Will you follow us and pray for his sinful soul?'

As these words are spoken, the funeral procession seems to pause, and one advances who flings back the wreaths and flowers which shroud the face, and lo! Don Juan gazes on his own visage.

Spellbound, he seems to join the ghastly throng, which wends its slow way into the church of Santa Inez, where

spectral priests appear to meet it, and carry the bier into the nave, where, next morning, Don Juan is found by the nuns coming to matins, insensible upon the stones.

After this second warning, the profligate Don reformed; made up with Doña Elvira, his virtuous but shrewish wife; dismissed all his Zerlinas to their homes, and publicly to testify to the sincerity of his repentance in the city where he had sinned, founded an hospital called La Caridad, endowing it out of his ample fortune to the value of a thousand ducats yearly.

You cannot pass a day in Seville without remarking it; opposite the wharf, crowded with merchant ships and steamers, standing a little back, out of the noise and bustle, but still conspicuous.

You enter by an ancient portal, much ornamented in that *barocco* style into which Seville fell when it ceased to be Moorish. Overhead these words—

'SANTA CARIDAD
DOMUS PAUPERIUM
SCALA CŒLI.'

A porter receives you and passes you on into a graceful sweep of double patios, separated by airy pillars. (Some wretch has painted them blue, but even that desecration cannot detract from their antique beauty.) Waiting there, I see two high windows lighting a Gothic hall, where old men sit, so shrunk and shrivelled one seems to think death has forgotten them. The youngest at least eighty, is reading aloud from a dog's-eared book to his elders; one dozing from feebleness, another holding a cigarette he seems incapable of lighting. Meanwhile, a Sister of Mercy approaches, and unlocking a side door, ushers me into a large church with twisted pillars, such as Raphael loved. The stuccoed roof is richly painted in compartments, and ample domes rest upon frescoed spandrels. It is not the church, but Murillo's pictures which attract the crowd. An Infant Saviour and St John, the miracle of the loaves and fishes, and Moses striking the rock. After kneeling before the Host at the altar, the Sister, in her white cap and apron, rises, crosses herself devoutly, and signing to me to follow her, points to a flat monumental slab

let into the pavement of the altar. On the slab are these words, 'To the memory of the greatest sinner that ever lived, Don Juan de Mañara (Cenizas del Peor hombre que ha habido en el Mundo).'

CHAPTER XVI.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—MURILLO AND COLUMBUS.

Statue of Murillo—His Works in the Museo—Legend of the 'Virgin of the Napkin'—Cell in which Murillo died—Monument of Columbus in the Cathedral—Relics of Him in the Capitular Library—His Name connected with Seville.

But Seville has other memories beside Figaro and Don Juan.

Two great names meet me at every turn, Murillo and Columbus. The painter, to be seen in marble, life-size, upon a pedestal, in a pleasant sun-swept square, before an old-fashioned hall, the Picture Gallery, reached through many venerable patios; Columbus at the Cathedral.

No profane hand has dared to meddle with Murillo's works; stained and blurred, it is true, and coated by altar smoke and varnish, but otherwise intact, as they left his easel.

Here in the old hall you may contemplate the rapt ecstasy of San Anthony, listening to the pipings of a celestial choir. Heaven and the infinite are in his glance; no mystery left; he has penetrated all, gazing at the divine Child, who touches him with upraised finger—that the round-limbed little creature is an incarnate God is told by the golden aureole and groups of angels and seraphims hovering around.

(No master has ever created such divine infants as Murillo. To understand him you must come to Andalusia.)

His Santo Tomaso, which hangs near, has a face calm and set, as with majestic action he turns towards a swathed figure, with crutches prostrate at his feet. This picture is absolutely blackened by centuries of dust, but no one dreams of restoring it! There it is, in all its integrity; something in style between the delicate handling of Vandyke and the truth and fervour of the Veronese.

Farther on, two grand-faced friars bear the model of a church, and the local saints, Justina and Rufina, strong, dark-haired damsels, their pottery at their feet, look out from the canvas, as quite equal to the *tapageux rôle* tradition assigns them.

A life-sized Virgin, very different from the inanities of the Madrid gallery, floats in a passionate atmosphere of crimson and orange; her grand head raised, her lips parted, her extended foot impelling the globe. Angels in bliss contemplate her, fly, shoot, spring, and precipitate themselves in gracious curves; some rush on in ranks—others pause to listen to ethereal harmonies; a brush as of snowy wings—a meeting, pressing, mounting, in palpitating zones, like the dithyrambic measure of a crescendo of Beethoven.

The famous 'Virgin of the Napkin' is of another type. A lustrous-skinned Andalusian, like a ripe peach, carries a child, which leaps from the canvas. Nothing celestial about this one, a buxom *gitana*, with glossy hair, to be seen any day lounging beside the river at Triana, the features so marked withal, one feels that it is a portrait, and that she has a history—and here it is, as related to me by the director himself.

Murillo, living at that time much in the Capuchin convent at Seville, near the gate of Cordova, stood one day painting before his easel in a shaded room, overlooking an old garden. Hours had passed by unnoticed, when Brother Pepe, entering with his midday meal, roused him. At the sight of the bright circles of angels' heads Murillo's hand was creating, the lay brother stood open-mouthed.

'Hermoso!' cried he, as soon as he could find words to speak: 'God has been very good to you, Señor Maestro, and raised you up to His throne to show you heavenly mysteries. You are a god, too, in your way. If from nothing He made the world, you, by your genius, give new life to it.'

'That is the mission of art,' replied Murillo gravely, placing his palette and brushes on a chair.

'If I could but possess one of your virgins,' cried the monk, 'only a little one, I should be the happiest man in Seville! *Mas como?* I have not so much as a *maravedi* in the world.'

'Gold would not purchase *that*,' replied Murillo, proudly pointing to his work; 'but to prove to you that I am not mercenary, or above the claims of friendship, bring me a canvas, and I promise to paint something on it.'

'A canvas, maestro? Where am I to get it, when I have no money? Your worship is surely laughing at me.'

'Not at all,' answered Murillo; 'I am quite serious. Here is this rough napkin you have brought me with my food. On this I promise to keep my word.'

The balcony of Murillo's room overlooked the Plaza de Santa Cruz—much as we see it now—bordered with round-headed acacias, overshadowing benches, and the white, flat-roofed houses of the *Juderia* quarter, approached by such narrow lanes two men can scarcely pass abreast.

At that moment a *gitana* appeared and took her seat upon one of the benches, a little, brown-faced infant hanging at her breast.

'Great God!' exclaimed Murillo, gazing down at her in a kind of ecstasy. 'Can it be really her? My first love! Is she alive?'

Meanwhile the *gitana*, busy with her child, pulling at the tresses of her raven air, then turning its dimpled face upwards with a smile, saw nothing of Murillo; nor was she aware that he had snatched up a napkin, and was rapidly tracing on it her image and the child's.

. . . . . .

In the night came to him a vision of his love—the face upon the napkin, life-like, and the sad memories it recalled.

Again Brother Pepe appeared to enter his chamber, this time to claim the picture.

'Never,' cried Murillo, covering it with his body; 'never while I live.' And he and the monk seemed to wrestle in mortal strife.

Then spoke the voice of conscience, 'She loved you; she belongs to another. You, too, have stood before the altar with an honest wife. To keep this portrait would be a sin! It might injure her, your beloved.'

Towards morning Murillo sank into a deep sleep, lying in an armchair before the picture, and so he was found by Brother Pepe, coming at the accustomed hour in the morning.

'Awake, master,' cried Pepe, touching him on the shoulder; and as Murillo turned, his waking eyes fixed themselves on the Virgin.

'Are you come for that, Brother Pepe?' he asked in a low voice, pointing to the picture; 'if so, take it. Carry it away: it is too precious.'

Strange words, considered by Brother Pepe as but the wandering of the master's mind, and not concerning him at all, so seizing upon the picture he carried it away.

. . . . . .

This is the legend of the 'Virgin of the Napkin' in the Picture Gallery at Seville.

The Capuchin Convent is now destroyed, and the site turned into a street of small houses.

At No. 2, Plaza del Alfaro, facing the angle of the Plaza Santa Cruz, you ring a bell, and are shown by the *criada* (not at all like a Madonna) into a damp little cell, with one window, on the ground-floor, paved with stone. Here she tells you that Murillo died one year after that fall from his high easel at Cadiz, while painting an altar-piece, from which he never recovered.

The monument to the memory of the great Columbus (called in Spain, Colon—a name perpetuated in his descendants, the Duques de Veragua), is a large flagstone let into the marble flooring in the centre of the Cathedral. I never go there but I pause over it with a kind of awe—

'A Castilla y a Leon
Nuevo Mundo dio Colon,'

is the motto, and on either side, cut in the stone, are the rude outlines of two small caravels—models of the vessels of that day in which Columbus dared to traverse unknown seas.

In shape they somewhat resemble Grecian triremes, a square raised stern bearing a metal lantern as a night signal, with a crooked stem—and floating at the prow the flag of Spain. On the deck appears the outline of a quaint mariner, with a broad sombrero, which I love to think represents Columbus—wearing a thick frieze coat, with a telescope to his eye.

A monument by proxy this, after all, for here lies not Columbus himself, but his favourite son, Fernando—'worshipper of his father's genius, and chronicler of his name.'

Colon's body, as uneasy in death as it was in life, had many changes. For a time it lay in a monastery at Seville, then was removed to the island of Domingo, and finally transferred to Havannah, where it rests at last.

. . . . . .

In the Holy Week, the illuminated sepulchre is placed over what is known as 'Columbus's Tomb,' an eloquent tribute to the memory of the great discoverer who brought a new world to light.

Within a glass case in the Capitular Library, bequeathed by Fernando to the city, are his books of reference, neatly annotated in his own clear hand, and a chart drawn by himself on parchment, a rude sketch of the American seaboard and the surrounding ocean, with soundings for sunken rocks, and the course of tides and currents specially noted—the parchment partly blurred as if by the action of sea water.

As I gaze on these relics, so neatly precise, and finished with the care of a man who knows how to wait with the patience of genius, a tall form rises to my eye—fair complexioned, thin-faced, blue-eyed, and grey-haired at thirty, sitting calmly at the poop of the little caravel, his eyes fixed on this chart, issuing orders to the helmsman to steer into unknown seas, while around him a mutinous crew gathers, calling on him with oaths and imprecations to turn the rudder and sail back to Spain!

Time after time this happened—the sailors mutinied and threatened him with death; and time after time the dignity and eloquence of Columbus mastered them, until that wild cry of 'Tierra, Tierra!' broke from the masthead, as the advancing waves gathered on the shores of the island of San Salvador—the precincts of a new world.

Now, why did the great navigator tarnish his name by exorbitant demands of recompense? This, and not royal neglect, was the real traverse of his life, and indisposed the Catholic sovereigns to aid him. His legitimate son and heir, Diego Colon (Fernando was illegitimate), commuted these claims under Charles V. into a grant of extensive estates in Castile, and the rank of grandee of Spain; as Diego married a niece of the Duke of Alva, the family of Colon even then must have have acquired importance.

It was from Seville and the Guadalquivir, at the little

port of Palos near Cadiz, that Columbus set sail in those two frail barks represented on his monument with a third vessel of larger tonnage.

To Seville he returned after his first successful voyage, to transact business at the Lonja (the Spanish India House), and to deposit there his maps and papers, now the archives of the New World. (With patience and an order you may inspect them, 30,000 in number.)

Again, on his return from his fourth and last voyage he came to Seville, anchoring at San Lucar, in the Bay of Cadiz—to find, alas! his constant friend and protectress, Isabel, on her deathbed.

This was the last bitter drop in the cup of a broken-hearted man. His robust constitution, already impaired by repeated attacks of gout, aggravated by the hardships of his life, broke down, and he shrank up into a premature old age.

Too weak and too crippled to travel to Segovia, where the Court then lay, he sent his son Fernando to plead his cause with Ferdinand; but that wary Catalan, busy with the hasty preparations for his second marriage with the young beauty, Germaine de Foix, gave him no heed.

In a milder season Columbus personally presented himself at Court, but beyond vague words, obtained nothing from Ferdinand. Never during his life did he touch a penny of what should have been a vast revenue, and actually lived on *borrowed money* until his death, which took place at Valladolid.

CHAPTER XVII.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—THE ALCAZAR.

The Approach—Patio de las Banderas—Patio de la Monteria—Pedro's Seat of Justice—An Anecdote—The Audience Chamber—Patio de las Doncellas—The Caliph's Throne—Cide El Calel—The Red King and Don Pedro—The Balax—The Three Halls of Charles V.—Hall of the Ambassadors—Tragedy of Don Fadrique—Patio de las Muñecas—Modern Royalties at the Alcazar.

THE Alcazar is one of the two great sights of Seville, the Cathedral being the other.

The Alcazar, or house of Cæsar, where the Roman pre-

fects lived—or rather, Peter the Cruel's house, for that blood-thirsty and licentious youth here meets one at every step—is an ancient Moorish fortress, in the centre of the town.

Not a poetic ruin, like the Alhambra, but a real flesh and blood Arab castle, whole and entire, ready to receive emirs or sultans, kings, queens or princes, whenever it may be their good pleasure to visit it.

You come upon it through an orange-planted square, before the southern porch of the Cathedral, the vast mass of the Lonja, or India House, on the other side—Cathedral and Lonja quite dwarfing the old Moslem wall—pass under a low arch sunk between two castellated towers, and stand in the first court, the Patio de las Banderas, where waves the flag of Spain.

Orange-planted too this Patio, and smelling sweet, but so damp and weedy, and surrounded by such parti-coloured modern houses, you have to rub your eyes, and tell yourself that the Alcazar was founded by the Toledan Jalubi, as long ago as when Seville was an independent Moorish state, and was rebuilt by Peter the Cruel at the same period that the Alhambra was finished by Yusuf at Grenada—Peter and Yusuf being on such friendly terms that the same Moorish architects wrought for both. Alas! not only parti-coloured walls within these ancient precincts, but instead of turbaned Mussulman or swarthy Ethiop brandishing a club, I am challenged by a diminutive Spanish soldier at the door!

With a silver bribe I pass him, then plunge into a doubly pillared passage, the Apeador, with raftered roof, created for his convenience by that melancholy monarch, Philip V., who liked no one to look at him. Turn to the right down another covered way, long, straight and raftered also, with a glance of gleaming garden, called of 'Maria di Padilla,' and emerge into the inner Patio de la Monteria, where in old times, amid a crowd of knights, esquires and pages, waiting in the sun, a horn sounded as signal for Caliph or King to mount and ride.

Three sides are modern; on the fourth an Arab portal blazes like a gem, a glorious blending of red, blue and gold on snowy surfaces of finest fretwork; painted roofs cast rich shadows, arabesques form into Cufic letters and diapered borders, and light pillared *miradors* part into tripart groups

of horseshoe arches. The magic of this portal, coming so suddenly into sight, and rising tier above tier, parapet on parapet, in a glow of Oriental colours to a central tower or spire all gold, against an azure sky, transports one in an instant into another world. The door (set in a framework like an Egyptian tomb) of a curious mosaic of dark wood, are thoroughly Eastern; and on either hand are marble benches sunk in the arcaded splendour of the walls.

It was on the right-hand side that Don Pedro took his seat daily as El Rey Justiciero, surrounded by guards and Alguazils, imitating the rough-and-ready justice of African Emirs and Caliphs — over his head a Gothic inscription setting forth that 'the most high and powerful Don Pedro, by the grace of God King of Castile and Leon, ordered these castles and fortresses to be erected, 1402,' while his dark-eyed mistress, Maria de Padilla, watched him from above, leaning out of the central *mirador;* Don Pedro not lacking, as I have said, a certain youthful majesty, and glitter of yellow locks, which caught the eyes of the ladies, spite of his crimes.

Anent his justice, here is an anecdote.

One day, taking his seat as usual, surrounded by his guards, he commanded that certain men should be brought before him, whose arrest he had ordered that very morning as they were quietly drifting down the Guadalquivir with the tide, upon a wooden raft. His knitted brows and frowning countenance boded ill to the rough-looking countrymen brought trembling into the court.

'How comes it, fellow?' asks the King, his steely blue eye upon the foremost man, 'that you dare to come to Seville and cheat me of my dues on the timber that floats down the stream? Robbers! Think you you will escape unpunished?'

'O King,' answered the foremost man, falling upon his knees, 'in what have we offended? We are four poor men from Puerto de Santa Maria, incapable of deceiving anyone, much less your loyal Grace.'

'Liar!' roars the young King, starting from his seat. 'Look at me: do you not know me?'

'No, sire, I have never to my knowledge set eyes on you before.'

'You did not meet me last night upon the quay?'

'No, my liege.'

'Come now'—and a cynical smile spreads over his fair face,—'remember! Did not a stranger help you to unload a raft—a fellow you found sleeping under a boat, wrapped in a cloak? Did you not wake him and promise to pay him well if he would aid you to land certain timber, so that you might start before sunrise?'

'O King, it is true we spoke with such a fellow—mean, and almost in rags, and he did help us after sunset to land some wood. We paid him and let him go, and the King's dues upon it were lodged at the Torre d'Oro before we left.'

'Villains!' cried the King, his features darkening with passion. 'A pretty example! This is how my subjects lie and rob and cheat! I should like to cut off your heads with my own hand. Know, then, that I am that *fellow* who helped you—that mean person in rags. Did you not say the night was dark, and that no man would see you land the timber, and you should escape the dues? And did you not add that those dues were wrung unjustly from poor men? And that the King who slept in golden chambers would be none the worse if he lost it? And did I not tell you that my name was Pedro, and to remember it well—Pedro—Pedro!'—here the cruel boy broke into a mocking laugh more terrible than threats. 'Now *I* am that Pedro, King of Castile and Leon, and Caliph of Cordova and Seville!' Then turning to the guards who lined the court: 'Cut off the heads of these carrion and set them on the wharf, that all men may know me as I am—El Rey Justiciero—and obey my laws!'

From the entrance I pass into the audience chamber, cool and lofty, and parted by horse-shoe arches into three divisions, from which hung draperies or tapestry—lines of snowy carving running under a deeply indented ceiling, massed into the most amazing tints; the lower walls, a mosaic of sombre cinque cento tiles (observe that these Oriental masters of colours always throw the brightest shades upwards, and that the mellow purples, sober sage-greens, pale yellows and black, are invariably reserved for the base).

The great Patio de las Doncellas follows; so named because here the Moorish kings, seated on their throne, caused to pass before them such Andalusian beauties as were

deemed worthy of their harem; fifty rich and fifty poor, once a-year, *au choix!* A patio broken by fountains and fenced by colonnades of scolloped arches, resting on slenderest clustered pillars, shrouded above by veils of finest lacework, wrought in stone of that pale ivory tint of *guipure*, or ancient point—condensed by centuries of sunshine, and sown with bouquets worked on transparent lozenges—a thick uneven web as of thread many times warped, the better to bring out the pattern; and across the surface, bands of enamelled arabesques on which rest delicately coloured escutcheons—Castile, Leon, the traverse of Navarre, El Nodo, the Pillars of Hercules, and the proud motto, *Plus ultra.* The peristyle within blazing with a network of *azulejo*, piled in a magnificent confusion; four lofty doorways ablush with gold leading to other patios, where the sun glints on green bananas and great fronds of palm, and other halls as gorgeous as the first.

There are closely latticed casements—*celosias* (from *celoso* —jealousy), framed in delicate slabs, separated by twin pillarets—oh, so beautiful! and scrolls and cabalistic letters and splashes of ardent colour, honeycombed in gold.

At the southern end, within a sunk dome buried in the arcade, every interstice pencilled with lapis lazuli and carmine, golden stalactites dropping overhead, is the Caliph's throne—a plain slab of white marble, raised but a few feet from the ground, obviously but the pedestal for an Oriental divan.

How still it is! No rustle of silken robes, nor ring of mailed feet hurrying by, or clash of glancing scimitars, nor crowding of barbaric kings or superb emirs, their turbans glittering with gems, coming to do homage. No crescent banners borne by dusky knights, nor ropes of Orient pearl, nor flash of diamonds hung on shrouded forms, the graceful lines betraying female loveliness. No embroidered slippers tapping the marble floor, nor Eastern slaves crowding round the pillars; nor Nubian guards reposing beside the fountain, as when that gallant Moor, Cidi El Kalel, rushed headlong into the presence of Axataff, last Moslem King of Seville, to recount the victory of King Ferdinand at Jaen, and warn him that the Christian host was advancing on Seville. 'Ask me not, O King!' cries Cidi, addressing the terrified Caliph seated on

his throne, 'how our brethren fare, but ask rather the hard flints of the walls of Jean which look down upon the slain.'

Here later the Red King, Bermejo (the Lagan of Spanish song, usurper of the throne of Granada) arrived with his escort of five hundred Moors to offer homage to Don Pedro. Unhappy Lagan! among other priceless jewels with which he had decked his turban were 'three fair rubies as big as pigeons' eggs,' the centre one known as 'the Balax of the Red King'—a spectacle altogether more than our Don Pedro (a great amateur of gems) could bear! Most hospitably he smiled on the Red King, feasted him, and *slew* him—that particular gem, the Balax, a Saracenic Kohinoor, after being worn by his mistress, Maria de Padilla, presented by him after the victory of Navarete to our Edward, the Black Prince, his ally, and by the Black Prince placed among the regalia of the English crown. In course of time to come down to Queen Elizabeth, who specially pointed out its beauty to Melville, Mary Stuart's ambassador. (Melville records it in his diary 'as a fair ruby big as a racquet ball') 'and,' he says, 'he urged Elizabeth to present it as a love token to his Queen; but Elizabeth, not loving her cousin and treasuring the gem, refused, and placed it instead upon the regal coronet, where it still blazes. Further I plunge into the Middle Ages in the three halls of Charles V.; Moorish also, and gilt latticed and gloriously carved in dull yellows and gold.

That Charles, who as King of Spain shares the local interest of Seville and of the Alcazar with Don Pedro, really inhabited these rooms, now furnished with modern divans and couches for the use of the ex-Queen Isabel during her visits to the Alcazar, is devoutly believed. In the Alcazar, Charles wedded his wife, Isabel of Portugal, and added on a terrace towards the garden, on the upper storey, with southern rooms to suit his chilly habit.

Wherever Charles is found there is always warmth, and a garden. Here the windows look towards a quaint plaisance, fragrant with jasmine, nespole, and palms.

Next comes the crown of all, the Hall of the Ambassadors, literally from marble floor to crystal and mother-of-pearl-lined roof one blaze of iris hues—every inch an enchantment. From under the double range of gilt latticed galleries run-

ning round for the harem, look out the dim visages of painted kings, from remote Churdavintas to Bourbon Philip; and mountains of light reflect in pendent chandeliers, radiently luminous, the savage splendour of Saracenic panelling —white filigree and burnished honeycomb—all pressed together and glowing as on a woof of gorgeous tapestry; golden cornices on which rest imperial crowns; floating banners, and glancing weapons—calling up visions of Eastern feats of arms and Moorish revels, the sparkle of Oriental eyes, a jewelled arm shining out of silvery draperies, and henna-tipped fingers, as the Eastern houris crowd aloft behind the lattice—while below Numidian maidens dance the Zambra or Seguidilla to the sound of zithers and timbrels, before swarthy lords lolling on pearl-sewn seats, tossing off draughts of strong wine (the Spanish Moors were but slack Mahommedans) from jewelled wine-cups!

From one of the gilded balconies placed above the triplet-grouped arches breaking the four walls, Don Pedro stood watching with savage eyes the entrance of his half-brother, Don Fadrique, Grand-Master of Santiago (we met him at Toledo, the supposed seducer of his wife, Doña Blanche of France), summoned from Coimbra in Portugal, where he had taken refuge after his mother's death—'La Favorita,' the powerful mistress of Peter's father. (Peter is also accused of causing Leonora's death. Certain it is he made away with two of her infant sons.)

'Come to Seville, brother,' said Don Pedro's treacherous missive, addressed to Don Fadrique. 'I am about to hold a tournament of titled reeds, and I can ill spare your lance.' And the comely youth, dusty and travel-stained, came confidingly; but at the Alcazar gates his trusty followers were all shut out. No men of arms upon the towers to do him honour, nor troops to man the walls and wind a clarion of welcome; no seneschal bearing his wand of office, to unlock the doors, nor light-footed pages to seize his bridle. Instead, an ominous silence, the howl of a whipped hound, the rattling of a chain, and at her *mirador* a dark form, glistening with gems, watching him from behind a pillar.

Surely his end is near!

Following from the snowy Patio de las Doncellas, where light shadows fall, he enters the glorious hall; but ere he

has passed the marble sill, a loud discordant laugh falls on his ear, and a band of armed men seizes upon him. Gallantly the poor boy sells his life, fighting, his back to a pillar, his sword-arm, it is said, entangled in his cloak—but in vain; the murderous band deal him death blows all round. He falls, and his life-blood pours out on the floor.

Then it was, says tradition, that Don Pedro appeared coming down from the gilded balcony and kicked the bleeding corpse where it lay, and bloodhounds licked up the blood.

Still the stain is there. The guide points to it on the marble floor, in dull red splashes.

The tiny Patio de las Muñecas (puppets) lies beyond—the sweetest bit of Saracenic pencilling eyes ever beheld; one sheet of snowy lacework, as though wrought for angels. Not a speck of colour, not a badge or an initial, only tiers of open galleries above, and beneath lattices all white. If ever those dark Eastern beauties who once lived here return to haunt the glimpses of the moon, it is surely in this patio their dazzling forms will linger. Pearl-crowned Exilona, the poetic Queen of Abdalaxis, and widow of Don Roderick; the soft shadow of Eastern Fatima, and that false Christian maid, Isabel de Solis, who, by her ambition, ended the Moors in Spain.

Peace be to their ashes; they had a lovely home!

. . . . . .

Now the scene shifts. Instead of the old kings we have Prince Charming, with his Austrian Queen, cousin of the Emperor of Austria, and their royal Infanta Baby come to Seville, and taking air and exercise in the old garden of the Alcazar. All day we are running after them. No shadows these, but very genuine flesh and blood sovereigns, long, I hope, to remain so, come from Cadiz and Saint Lucar, where they stayed with the Montpensiers to negotiate, it is said, a marriage between the Infanta Eulalie (King Alfonzo's youngest sister, a handsome girl, much like her mother, Queen Isabel, only very fair) and Don Antonio de Bourbon, the Duke's only son, with a well-lined purse, needful, as the Infantas have but a slender dowry.

They arrived yesterday. Everyone official, such as the Captain-General, the Governor and the Alcalde, in splendid unforms (the old magnificence of Spain comes out on these

occasions), at the station to meet them; also everyone else who dared to place Seville and Andalusia 'à la disposicion de Vuestra Magestad'; and all day long a living stream has poured through the city to the fields of San Sebastian, where the ramshackle station is.

From a tribune under the Lonja I saw them pass, in a low open carriage, attended by a brilliant *cortège* of all the troops in Seville.

I cannot say the people distinguished themselves. Scarcely a hat was raised to the young King, always composed and smiling. They tell me the people here are Republican, and proved it with bloody emphasis in the Revolution, when the tobacco manufactory—an enormous building, once a palace, with twenty-eight internal patios—was manned by a desperate mob. But if there was any coldness in the crowd, it was made up for by the ladies in the tribune, who clapped and cried 'Viva,' and pelted the Queen with flowers until she was nearly blind. Christina is fair and tall, a little German in manner, with much distinction. In the afternoon they attended a *Te Deum* in the Cathedral; a failure, because the music was not loud enough to drown the noisy crowd which invaded the mighty aisles. A very vulgar crowd, pushing, scrambling, racing—first to the high altar, then into the Capilla Real, when the Royalties went to adore the relics, then back again to the Coro; the King and Queen passing through the lines of the Guardias Civiles with naked swords. At last, with thousands and thousands after them, they disappeared into the walls of the dear old Alcazar; Don Pedro de Solis, the Jefe, having furbished it up with pretty things borrowed from all the ladies.

On the festivities that ensued during their stay I do not enlarge. Their Majesties went to three theatres on three successive nights, gave dinners, and attended a review in a sun so broiling it was enough to put out their eyes. But I must say a word about the ceremony that ended all—a reception of ladies by the Queen. 'All who liked to go,' it was announced, 'to appear in walking dress.' Sixty availed themselves of the invitation; some in veils, some in bonnets, some with toilettes quite *sans façon*, some superb.

When her Majesty came out of her boudoir into the gallery of Maria de Padilla, with openwork walls of sculp-

tured stone, where we awaited her, she gave a slight shudder, then valiantly set to work to say something agreeable to everyone.

And what a task! The Grand Mistress, a hurly-burly sort of woman with a red face (a Duchess all the same) explaining who each lady was—also to be pitied profoundly.

'You, madam?' turning to an old dowager in rusty black.

'Oh! I am aunt to the Archbishop, and so I come.

'And you?'

'Niece to Count B— of Cuba; my godfather was chief baker of the Court.'

Another with a child, at which the Grand Mistress glanced disapprovingly.

'I have brought her for loyalty.'

All this out loud, then repeated softly to the Queen pacing down two weary rows of petticoats, making a little speech to everyone in very good Spanish. For two mortal hours this lasted. One lady asked her Majesty point blank, if the Infanta with her was Paz or Eulalie?

At which the Queen smiled a little, then taking up the tone (for no *alteze* was given by this candid female), answered,—

'It is Eulalie,' and passed on.

. . . . . .

Since I wrote, another sovereign inhabits the Alcazar, Isabella the ex-Queen, mother of the King. She has given up the Palace of Castile, while she lived in Paris, and come again to Spain, where, in spite of expulsion and abdication and many evil things, she is so profoundly loved.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—DREAMS IN THE ALCAZAR GARDENS.

Historic Memories—Charles V. and Diego, the Gardener—Bath of Joanna—Maria de Padilla—Don Pedro and the Four Judges.

THE happiest hours I pass at Seville are day-dreaming in the Alcazar garden, seated on a porcelain bench, under a blue-green palm.

The dear old place, how I love it! crossed and re-crossed by hedges of myrtle and box, followed by endless pathways of brilliant *azulejo* tiles in stars, half-moons, circles and zigzags; the ground broken by painted Belvideres, pillared galleries, mediæval statues, chiselled pedestals, bubbling fountains, broad basins and marble runnels, all formed into a succession of verdant squares. A bronze Nereid poising herself on a giant vase, from which water gurgles upon Cupids; frescoes of the Caracci school, Titans with stalwart limbs, and Neptune and Amphithrite attended by nymphs and the four seasons; flights of marble steps leading from one level to another; triumphal gates and trophies, breaking orange-lined walls; lizards coursing each other along porcelain paths; the chirrup of frogs in reedy corners; the twittering of birds in scented thickets, and hum of moths and bees under fan palms.

A royal garden where every sovereign has set his mark since the time of Cæsar. In that corner a labyrinth planted by Charles V., and the long line of his Belvidere, in rustic stonework, where he took exercise without descending stairs. In another, a shady tank full of water lilies, where the melancholy Philip V. fished. Here the subterranean Gothic-arched *baños* (bath) of Maria de Padilla, the aperture still visible where Don Pedro looked down on her as she bathed, and servile courtiers pledged each other in the water that touched her limbs. There the bath of Joanna la Loca; a chapel of Ferdinand and Isabel, the walls sheeted with *azulejo*, matrimonial '*nodos*' and clustered arrows; a figure of St Ferdinand after the siege, his armour dripping with Moorish blood; and memories of Alonzo the Wise, Don Pedro's father, the real 'Favorita' of the opera, Leonora de Guzman, by his side; Abdalasis and Tarif, Count Julian and the learned Abdurrahm—the East meeting the West in a flowery confusion of interlacing boughs. The *azahar* of a thousand blossoms is in the air, and deeply-tinted butterflies course each other among sculptured crowns, moss-grown coats of arms, crumbling eagles, and bygone monograms of love.

Now touching the pavilion of Charles V., covered with bright majolica tiles, on an open space in a wood of oranges, I find myself face to face with the great Emperor.

He is not yet fifty, but broken by gout and hard work; a corpse-like face, and his beard in great part white, yet still retaining that majesty of demeanour so well portrayed by Titian. Such pain is it to him to walk, he is carried from the Alcazar to the garden in a black leathern chair. A jewelled stick is in one hand, a bundle of papers in the other, his dress is of purple velvet, and he wears a *toque* with a single gem. No ornament but the chain of the Golden Fleece, and a ring given to him by his dead wife Isabel. These never leave him. By his side stands the gardener, a worthy Catalan, with difficulty kept from kneeling, and trembling all over every time the Emperor addresses him. His cap in one hand, in the other a rough plan, drawn by the Emperor himself, of a labyrinth he desires to plant.

'Courage, man, cheer up!' says Charles in a pleasant voice, looking at him. 'I am not an ogre to eat you. I see you have brought the plan of the labyrinth. Tell me, where shall we place it?'

Diego, thus encouraged, steadies himself and presents the paper, the Emperor holding it at arm's length the better to observe it; then he lays it on his knee, and drawing his swollen fingers over the lines, marks distances with a pencil.

'If it be the will of your Imperial Highness,' says Diego—

'Now, gardener,' interrupts Charles, looking up sharply, 'I am a busy man; no time for titles. Call me "Sire," that will do.'

'Sire,' says Diego, making a fresh start, 'I have considered the matter according to my humble judgment' (after all, once fairly launched, Diego finds the sound of his own voice not so terrible), 'and I should suggest the east corner of the fourth patio from the Alcazar for the site of the labyrinth, near the baths of your imperial mother the Infanta Joanna. It is very sheltered there.'

At the name of Joanna, never known but as '*La Loca*,' Charles, who has suffered in many ways from being the son of a mad mother, draws in his prominent lips and frowns. Fortunately the timid gardener does not preceive it, and goes on:

'For the labyrinth to do well, sire, it must lie in the shade. This is a thirsty soil.'

Charles, who has meanwhile been examining the paper and making points and crosses, now looks up.

'A right good idea, Diego; I approve it. We will place the labyrinth *there*. 'Now, with what trees shall it be planted?'

To see the great Master of Christendom sitting before his pavilion poring over that plan, and note his earnestness, one would think he had done nothing all his life but trim woods and order orchards.

'The Moors loved the myrtle, Sire,' suggests Diega, 'the small-leaved myrtle.'

'An accursed race,' cried the Emperor suddenly, 'whom may God exterminate!—but, it must be confessed, cunning in garden matters. The myrtle is a slow grower,' added he, thoughtfully, 'and life is short, Diego.'

'Sire,' puts in the gardener, his face brightening up, 'we will keep the young plants constantly watered. I will warrant your majesty that in five years—'

'Five years!' echoes Charles, a weary intonation in his voice and his eyes wandering into space. 'Why, five years is a lifetime.' (A pause.) 'Well, Diego, I suppose I must wait. But who knows where I may be in five years?'

Another pause. Does his fancy run to Yuste, and the green hills of Estramadura? The coffin in which he lay alive in there? And the dark sarcophagus which holds him now?

Then he proceeds absently:

'As you say, Diego, the small-leaved myrtle, near my mother's bath, in a quiet corner. Now,' and the Emperor raises the paper to the level of Diego's eyes, handling it as carefully as if it were a treaty of peace or war. 'Now, attend. Here is to be the issue. The lines are to run so, squaring to the centre, a statue must be placed there—a statue, you hear?'

Diego starts, drops his hat, picks it up again, and turns crimson. His terror of the great Emperor is chronic—he cannot overcome it.

'A good plan,' continues the Emperor, carrying out his line of thought, with no notice of Diego. 'But supposing I am not at Seville, or this paper be lost, or you dead, Diego' (the poor gardener turns pale). 'My labyrinth will be a mystery. That must not be. I desire to leave it along with this pavilion as a remembrance—my mark in the Alcazar where I have passed such happy days. Now, that folk may understand it (mark me, Diego, and leave off twisting of your

cap), I command that a small plan of it be graven on the floor of this pavilion in bronze!'

As he speaks, Charles turns to the graceful summer-house, beside which I am sitting, with a certain pride, as it stands, half Arab, half Gothic, a slanting sunbeam lighting up the coloured walls and lacy cornices.

'See to this, Diego. Give the orders at once in my name. The plan, in a pattern on the floor, small but distinct, in bronze, in memory of me!'

These last words come slowly, and there to this day upon the marble floor, beside Moorish water-rills for little streams and a square central basin, is the Emperor's plan, graven, as he said, in bronze. And further, in the eastern corner of the garden, sheltered by leafy walls and thickets of judas and daphne, is the Emperor's labyrinth, planted in small-leaved myrtle, in tolerable condition still, only the present gardener has clipped it half-way down to strengthen the plants, so that there is now no mystery at all, and the statue in the centre can be reached quite easily.

. . . . . .

The bath of Joanna la Loca (daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and mother of Charles) lies close by in one of the many patios, lined with orange-trees, into which the whole garden divides like a puzzle—a large open tank covered with coloured tiles.

She is so very mad, Joanna! Married to Philip le Bel, Duke of Burgundy, the handsomest man in Christendom, whom she worships, but who dislikes and despises her, her feeble mind gives way.

Only last spring, in Flanders, where she had followed him and given birth to Charles V.—in a wild paroxysm of jealousy, she flew upon Doña Catalina Alcantara, one of her ladies, and cut off her lovely hair, because Philip admired it.

Philip (the very image of an empty-headed coxcomb, as painted by Velasquez, dressed to perfection in a pearl-embroidered vest, held back by jewelled cords, a scarlet mantle on one shoulder, a gold chain round his neck, with the order of the Golden Fleece, and a dainty-feathered cap with a priceless diamond), ever since this outrage will neither look at Joanna nor speak to her. So, from furious accesses of mania, she has fallen into a morbid melancholia, from which

nothing can rouse her. Neither will she stay with her mother at Valladolid, nor dwell at Medina del Campo, nor alone. Nothing but the Alcazar, in Philip's presence, suits her.

Behold this daughter of a thousand kings, the heiress of three kingdoms, wandering under the shadow of the great palms—beside the central fountain, the gold fish swimming lazily at her feet, tame tropical birds piping in golden cages, and timid deer and greyhounds advancing to lick her hands—a long crape veil fastened coif-like upon her breast, and trailing behind her like a pall, sweeping black robes, her pale hands hanging listlessly.

It is her pleasure to appear in mourning during the period of Philip's displeasure. Her wild black eyes range round, intense yet fitful, and her teeth are set. Behind her, at a respectful distance, are her ladies (she is dangerous in these moods). One carries a richly bound copy of 'Amadis de Gaul,' to read to her (Amadis, the mirror of chivalry, the most beautiful of men, therefore like Philip, who never broke a lance except at a tournament); another with a fan; a third bearing her mantle. Thus she hurries onwards towards her bath. Nothing pleases her like bathing. The square tank and the high walls, the oranges and the myrtle which shut it in, have raised in her crazy brain a vision of Bathsheba and David. She is sure Philip will peep over the wall, crown on head, and smile at her. So impatient is she to see him, that without giving her attendants time to come up, she tears off her veil, unloosens the fastenings of her raven hair, already streaked with white, and casts aside her robes. Then, naked as Uriah's wife, she plunges into the water, scented with cassia and attar, her expectant eyes fixed on the opposite wall.

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Then uprises a form terrible in beauty—Don Pedro's mistress, Maria da Padilla—a fan her sceptre, and Love's seat her throne; a true-born Andalusian, this one, with red lips, and teeth like pearls; a low brow fringed with sequins, and painted eyes artificially brightened; a face full of scorn, and tapering fingers like claws.

She does not walk, but glides into the open court which bears her name, full of breezes from the Guadalquivir and currents of warm air, where tents of silk are spread with soft Persian carpets and divans for repose. Eastern slaves in at-

tendance ready to chafe her limbs with delicate perfumes, to wave feathered fans over her, and pour cordials from chased cups. Pink almond-trees bend over her head, and the red lilies of the amaryllis gather at her feet.

Some women are born queens, others achieve greatness. There are peasant princesses and clumsy empresses; sultanas of the buskin and the lute; odalisques whose voices catch Caliphs' ears, and modest violets aping the rose; but if ever a woman was born to reign, it is this one—haughty, calm, serene; under the most enticing forms hiding a will of steel; remorseless, fearless, merciless, and cold.

They say you are a Jew, Maria! What matter? Don Pedro may wed fifty Blanches, and kill them for your love, watching your beauties from a bull's-eye window opening over your bath, for never will he look upon your like again!

. . . . . .

And the young tyrant Don Pedro, I see him too, gliding through a green patio. A close hood of dull hue around this face, a shower of auburn curls falling on a sombre *capa*; no holiday king like Roderick, flaunting in purple robes, but silent and stern from childhood. In these gardens where he has grown, the very labourers fly as they hear the cracking of his knees and note his halting step, and the guards who watch him screen themselves among the groves. Alone he sits on the octagonal rim of the great central fountain, his cold blue eyes fixed on the crystal spray which rises, his hand playing with the jewelled hilt of a dagger. Suddenly he turns and beckons to one of the gardeners, whom he catches sight of, concealed behind a tree.

'Pluck me,' says he, in a harsh voice, 'five oranges.'

Five golden globes are put into his hand. With his dagger he cuts each in half, places under them a little pivot of wood, and stooping, floats them in the water of the basin. Then he sounds a golden whistle, and a Moorish page ushers in four soberly-dressed men who, slowly filing down the flowery walks, make obeisance, he lifting his head in scorn.

'Welcome, most reverend judges, upon whose conscience rests the honour of Castile,' says Pedro, with a strange smile.

Actor as he is, he cannot soften the tones of his harsh voice. The four judges perceive this and tremble.

'I have sent for you into my garden,' he says, 'because

the day is fine, and life they say is short, and because I have something whereon to question you. Turn your eyes, excellent señors, upon that basin, and tell me how many oranges float there.'

'Ten, your grace,' replies the foremost judge, bowing.

As he speaks a swift fire shoots from Don Pedro's eyes, and with an impulse of sudden rage, he makes as if he would seize the learned man and throttle him.

'Ten, you say? Thief! Liar! Fool! Ten? Ha, ha!' and that horrid, discordant laugh rings through the groves. 'Is this the way you judge my people and replace *me?*'

Then he stoops, and seizing one of the cut oranges, flings it in the face of the affrighted judge, and proceeds,—

'Men who can lie like that deserve to die. Hold! Guards! Lead away these unjust men, cut off their heads and hang them to the cornice of my room, that I may see how gallantly my judges look in death.'

And there the heads hung until they dropped asunder; and still to this day you can see the effigy of them carved in stone over a door.

CHAPTER XIX.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—A SUNDAY.

Everything *en fête*—Garden of the Glorietta—A Group of Dancers—Seville Spela—Geronimo—A Sunset View—St Felmo—The Montpensier Family—The Picture Gallery—The Palace.

To-DAY earth and heaven are alike *en fête.*

What matter if the Guadalquivir be a muddy stream, bordered by wharfs, and flowing to the sea through canebrakes and morasses; that the suburb of Triana on the opposite bank is vile with parti-coloured hovels; that the Torre d'Oro, a Moorish outpost or war tower, is not worth the admiration bestowed upon it, that the Delicias, our only walk, following along the river, is but a common-place avenue of ill-grown trees on the land side, jealously guarded by the gilt railings of the Montpensier palace on the other; that a crowd of humanity overflows everywhere—shabby equipages with bareheaded ladies, and the most absurd

liveries in the world, in sea-green and cobalt-blue, with nankin or white trousers.

(A word here: stare as I can, I see no absolute beauty; fine eyes, bright eyes, melting eyes, voluptuous eyes, with features which set them off; splendid hair, small heads and hands, an exquisite refinement in shape, and a general undulatiousness, eminently exciting—women to be carried off, like the Sabines, not only because they are of a type to create a passion to do foolish things, but because of their delicate limbs, tiny feet, slender waists and general lusciousness. And they know it too, the wily charmers, and shoot out glances which might fire Troy, with the tender unconsciousness as of innocent babes.)

Now I ask you to forget the dust, the glare, the noise, the strangeness of finding one's self solitary in such a motley crowd, and come with me to the solitary garden of the Glorietta, midway between the Delicias and the open plain, every path garlanded with orange trees, soft, fluffy plane-trees whispering to the breeze, violets kept moist in low trenches, and marble statues keeping watch over ancient fountains.

Look at that December sky, deep and clear as a sapphire. Clouds? No! not in Seville. The blue-green fronds of the palm cut against the azure vault, and the ardent light dazzles on glazed leaves of magnolia and citron grown into forest trees.

And such ethereal airs! so warm and genial; twilight gently yielding to the dusk of night as to a softer day; no chill or noxious vapours, and an after-glow such as lights up Egyptian pyramids.

Through another tall avenue of over-arching trees, I emerge upon a roadside *posada*. An old Gitana is roasting chestnuts under a tree in an earthen pot, and a group of black-eyed girls, decked with flowers, and peasants with twisted handkerchiefs knotted round their heads, and leather leggings, are dancing; not as others do, as with a purpose, but breaking out spontaneously like the blossoms,—beside a road, in a dry ditch, the hollow of a ploughed field, at the corner of a public garden, or among the benches of a drinking booth; song and dance as in the air they breathe.

An obliging neighbour strikes up a guitar; a tall boy clicks the castanets, and there they are hard at it. Two

girls and a man with outstretched arms circling round, joining hands and clapping, without much figure, but in graceful curves. A crowd has gathered; more singing, more hand-clapping and foot-stamps for accompaniment. The old Gitana forsakes her chestnuts simmering on the charcoal, the flat roof of the *posada* sprouts out with spectators, among which are two dogs, a lurcher, dirty white, with a fluffy tail and thin sides, suggesting lack of food, and a poodle, unknown to soap and grimy—with patient, much-enduring eyes, and wonderful intelligence. At the word *Anda* the poodle springs away, but if you meet him alone he is inclined to show his teeth at you. Now, looking on at the dancing, without sense of responsibility, he is civil enough, and the lurcher too, and quiet, but among the hills or in aloe-hedged lanes savage customers, enough I take it. Every beggar has his dog, and often two.

Not, as I said, dancing after all, but attitudinising to a rhythm floating in the brain, a rhythm put in with the bright flowers in their shining hair. No noise, no laughter, not a smile to echo the music, and the men almost solemn. Boys may shout and scream, laugh and joke, but not the men—Spanish dignity forbids it. Dancing, too, is a serious occupation, not to be treated lightly. As one sits down another rises; the castanets crack, the guitar jingles, and a maiden with ardent eyes seizes a tambourine.

Now I enter on a boundless plain (the Phœnicians called Seville Spela, or Sephela, Punic for *plain*), where rows of shining trees take up the thread of the avenue for a mile or two. (Truly when all is said and done, Andalusia is a hideous country; it is its poetic name which misleads you). Carriages still trail along with bareheaded ladies and impossible liveries, profitable as landmarks; also the cloaks of the men, who spité of the heat are muffled up to the chin. Not satisfied with one colour for lining, they wear several, arranged in stripes, which with an agreeable action of flinging deep folds over one shoulder with one end exposed, presents a lively contrast—also to be accepted as a 'godsend' in a colourless waste.

I myself am guarded by Geronimo, a sort of man Friday, who, not affecting gloves, which I order him to wear, does the most incredible things to hide his bare hands.

His whole soul is set on teaching me Spanish in an elementary way from natural objects. He points to a dog and says *perro*—a horse, *caballo*, and indicates the repose of a cemetery with his head upon his hand and closed up eyes. He would run through all nature after this fashion, but I rebel, at which he bows his head, and forgetting the loss of a bran new pair of gloves, for which I have scolded him, waves his hand despairingly. Nevertheless, he is a faithful creature, though he *does* hate carrying a shawl, and stuffs the most incredible things into his pocket to hide them, except in the case of a parcel obstinately resisting compression, when, accepting the degradation frankly, he swings it to and fro with the air of an Hidalgo.

Sir Robert Peel said that a gentleman might be permitted to carry in his hand three things—game, books, and an overcoat; but a Spaniard considers it beneath his dignity to transport anything but his own precious person, and that as seldom as possible.

But why look earthward? To the west the sun is setting in a sea of gold over low ranges of hills, which might be basalt, they look so hard and adamantine. At their base the black outline of Santi Ponce, a miserable hamlet (the name corrupted from San Geronico its Gothic bishop), the famous amphitheatre of Italica, and the ruins of that great Roman capital, birthplace of Trajan, Adrian, and Theodosius respected by Goths and Moors, but not, alas! by the Guadalquivir, which, turning aside its course, sent the mercantile Moors to settle at Seville.

Further on, a ray from the setting sun lights up the church-tower of Castileja de la Cuesta, and the following line of hills marking the outline of the turrets of the Arab Castle of Alfarache, now a convent (Alfarache in Moorish, river-key); and nearer at hand plays on the network of snowy arches and pillars of the Cathedral, the domes and porcelain towers rising out of the dark groves like a flame; the airy minarets of the Giralda crowning all—(not all the sacking of St Ferdinand and the battering of Goths and Vandals can wash, out the Eastern look of Seville),—while dim behind in dreamy cloudland rise the blue points of the Sierra Morena, Cervantes' land, where in deep valleys, by rushing streams, you may seek the pleasant company of

Dorothea by a brook, washing her snow-white feet, Cardenio behind a tree watching her, Lucinda and her lover at a mountain *posada*, Master Peter and his dolls, and Sancho astride—the *borrico* of his heart—renowned Dapple mounting a stern hillside in the wake of his master Don Quixote, seeking an appropriate spot where he can flagellate himself in honour of his Dulcinea.

Then a rush, a whistle, a scream, and the train to Malaga and Cadiz passes, leaving long wreaths of smoke over the black earth, at which my man Friday shouts out 'Ferro carril!' and points with his gloveless finger.

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On my way home I visit the palace of St Telmo, between the Delicias and the Prado of San Sebastiano, where the heretics were burnt, belonging to the once handsome Duc de Montpensier—in Spain Don Antonio de Bourbon—the *joli garçon* of the Orleans family, and as such selected to wed with our Queen. Instead, he espoused the Infanta Louisa, sister of Queen Isabel, in the avowed hope that her Majesty was so disposed of as to a husband as not to trouble the succession.

Outside, St Telmo displays a grand churrigueresque portal, and rows of windows and balconies gaily emblazoned with the arms of France and Spain, the Infanta's shield taking precedence of the Fleurs-de-lys—Montpensier being but a younger son, and the Duchess late heiress presumptive to the crown of Spain. Glazed galleries run out behind to the sunshine, facing a park extending down one side of the Delicias opposite the river, which, spite of affectations of weedy ponds, rustic bridges, cow-houses of roots, and a solitary deer tramping round a glass plot, is a veritable exotic paradise. In the long magnolia avenues, amid pepper-trees and palms, poor Mercedes wandered with her boy-lover Alphonso, dressed as an Andalusian with fan and mantle, and hence she went to fill that throne left empty all too soon. The death of Mercedes, entirely caused by the ignorance of the Spanish doctors, was followed by that of her next sister Christina, destined to succeed her on the *throne*, but not in the *heart* of her young cousin King.

For three months the King and the Montpensier family shut themselves up in the dreary Escurial beside their tombs.

If you have been there you would understand what such a seclusion means.

The last blow, the death of Christina, all but killed the poor Duchess! She has borne nine children and now but two remain, the Countess of Paris and a son, called Antonis, after his father. From a cold, haughty woman, reserved in her high rank, she sank at once into old age, and hides herself at San Lucor, cherishing her boy.

No one cares for the Duke, even though he did kill his cousin, Don Henry Bourbon, in a duel, an act of courage which recommends him to a chivalric people.

Nothing evil happens in Spain but the Duke bears the blame. He is hated because he is rich, despised because he is clever, suspected because he is French. He could not be accused of poisoning his own daughter, Mercedes, seeing that he had intrigued all his life to secure the throne for himself and his children. But had it been otherwise, he would have been responsible for that.

Seville abuses him because he sells his oranges; not a princely act, certainly, but quite in keeping with his Orleans blood. If he threw the oranges into the street, it would be all the same. Madrid hates him because (*they say*) he stirs up national strife, and sacrificed half his fortune (*they say*) to unseat his sister-in-law, Queen Isabel, and place his Infanta wife upon the throne. He is openly accused of favouring Don Carlos, and had a hand (of course) in Prim's assassination, and the attempts made on his nephew's life. That his dynastic schemes were frustrated by Mercedes' death, and that child after child has died, is interpreted by the Republicans as a judgment.

This dreadful personage is now a grey-haired man of much dignity of carriage, polite, gracious, accessible, full of artistic tastes, a lover of rare plants and flowers, and of art.

In the picture-gallery at St Telmo he has gathered many of the *chef d'œuvres* of his father, Louis Philippe's collection. His Zurbarans are the finest in Spain.

St Telmo is a most charming house, altered by him from a nautical college into an out-of-doors palace with colonnades, galleries, porticoes, green divans and leafy saloons in the Arab style. Whole rooms are hung with pen-and-ink sketches of himself, his brothers, and his father, interesting

and touching as family mementoes of one of the most promising royal races in the world. There is the guitar of Isabel Fernese, the Queen of the first Bourbon King, and patroness of Cardinal Alberoni, the sword of Don Pedro, and many tender reminiscences of the Duke's dead children. So many of them lie buried within the chapel, this once fair and happy home seems turned into a place of mourning. Both Duke and Duchess fly from it.

Besides the magnificent castle and domain of Randon, near Vichy, left by his aunt, Madame Adelaide, the Duke lives much at the Villa of San Lucar, de Barrameda.

In her rare visits to Paris, the Duchess of Montpensier is rallied by her sister, the ex-Queen Isabel, on her worn appearance. 'You always wanted to be the elder,' says the Queen, referring to the Duke's ambition in bygone days; 'Now no one would take you for the younger—I hope you are satisfied.'

CHAPTER XX.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—INUNDATION.

Everything at a Standstill—Spring once more.

BEHOLD us besieged, not by war but by water. One would think it a second deluge! Such an inundation has not happened for five years.

For three weeks it has rained in torrents, and the Guadalquivir and all the lesser streams, even the most absurd little brooklets, have all made up their minds to hedge us in. From the galleries of the Giralda the whole country looks like a boundless sea—the low hills on which stand the pointed towers of Castileja de la Cuesta and of Camma, like ships sailing on a boundless sea.

As to the low-lying suburbs of Seville and the orange-groves, they are engulfed.

Is it not horrible?

We have boats in the streets, and boardings raised on high trussels on which to walk. It wants but a guitar, and some hand-clapping for the men to dance, as on a tight-rope; so ready are Spaniards to turn life into a joke.

But it is no joke to the municipality. I never saw people more active. The poor Alcalde at the Ayuntamiento, the Prefect at the Prefecture, and the Captain-General, who looks so like Don Juan, have not slept for five nights. The sappers and miners are under arms day and night; a detachment of marines have arrived from Cadiz (the six officers dine at our *table d'hôte* and make my flesh creep) with *appareil de sauvetage* and all kinds of gear: and the peaceful Serenos with their long staffs never go to bed.

There is no gas, no theatre, no dancing-halls, decent or indecent. We cannot go to church, because the door is locked and the Plaza del Museo full of water. No telegraphs, and no papers or letters, excepting every three or four days, just as the rail from Cordova under incredible difficulties can bring them; then such a heap, that one wishes they had all been drowned.

I am in mortal fear. They tell me daily that the bed of Guadalquivir is much higher than the town, so that if a wave breaks over, God help us! Yet still it rains, rains, rains; the clouds, black as ink, scud by like threatening monsters, and there is a moist moaning in the wind, like a dirge from graveyards.

Nor is it only at Seville. Down among the tropical groves at Utrera, Jerez, and Puerto de Santa Maria, the Guadelete, not to be behindhand, sweeps over the plains. Now, as it is all plain down there to the walls of Cadiz, and at all times damp and sloppy, the Atlantic roaring at one end, and canals and nameless streams stagnant at the other, it must be a strange sight.

A friend of mine (he must have been instigated by a demon, I think) started this morning for the sherry town of Xerez, sat in a railway carriage near Utrera (Hercules' country, where he lifted the oxen) for twelve hours, a turbid stream running through the doors, expecting to be carried away every moment, and was finally rescued on the back of an ox and carried to the next station; not him only, but other passengers, women and children.

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I wrote this two weeks ago. Now the spring has come upon us. A lovely purple flush is on all the trees, melting into a delicate emerald, akin to purest water springs, buried

in moss and ferns (the rosy blossoming Judas-trees, tinted acacias, and pale pink almonds, are answerable for this), while the orange-woods, conscious of the deep treasure of rich fruit within their bosom, cast golden shadows.

Of all earthly things, nothing is fairer than an orange-tree in bloom. Every sense is gratified; for the palate, recommend me to the flavour of the burnished globe which lingers late upon the stalk; for the eye, the foliage has a natural affinity to the sun, the waxy petals of the flowers image the snowy tribute spring pays to departing winter; and for the nostrils there is a perfume subtler than carnation or jasmine, and more potent than the rose.

The ground is a carpet fresh from Nature's loom: beds of sweet-breathing violets scent the air; brightly-streaked tulips shoot from spiky sheaths; yellow oxalis with shamrock leaves bend low; lilies, like beautiful ladies dressed for a ball, wait upon green banks, some alone, some in groups, to be called out by the rose; irises of every tint, from white with yellow hearts, to lilac deepening into regal purple and pale violet, wild hyacinths and narcissus, recalling the beautiful son of Cephisus, the beloved of Apollo, dead by Zephyr's shaft; the scarlet bell-cup of the spotted dragon-flower with its open jaw; soft breathing bamboos and mimosas, yellow ringleted, nodding to each other in friendly vernal form, and the cool essences of gum-trees, scent the air.

Oh, the delicious shadow of cool nooks amid marble-bordered lakes and trickling fountains! If we have lost the white ferdinandias of autumn and the red geraniums, dræcine are making ready to appear, the aloe to shed its scales, the nespole and maple hedges to put on green robes.

As yet the jasmines are silent, but not for long. The voice of the gorgeous pomegranates and the pale tinted citrons will soon call them forth, and sprays of Banksian roses garland every wall.

And to all these come the insects for company; emerald-coated beetles, fine winged flies, and small early butterflies, white and gold. The birds pipe, seated on blooming boughs; the creamy breeze sings with a gentle voice, and the Guadalquivir ripples to the sea with the rising tide.

As the glory of the spring advances, the palms grow dim, the great fronds shrink into the coruscations of the scaly

trunk, and a little wing of intense orange, sole symptom of a new life, pushes itself forth from the crown.

In the male plant this wing spreads barren, and dies off like a branch of burnished seaweed; but in the female it forms into abundant shocks of amber-coloured dates.

The olives still wear their winter mantle soberly; but young leaves and buds press forward, and these are blue-green, and brilliant, and light up the hill sides.

The rotation of nature is felt by all the earth: each tree and plant and flower must run its course like man. Only the fair face of nature renews itself year by year, but the glory of our youth passes to return no more.

CHAPTER XXI.

SEVILLE CONTINUED.—ENVIRONS.

Those Terrible Roads—Spain might be so Rich—A Spanish Village—Castilleja de la Cuesta—Memorials of Cortes—Our Drive to Santi Ponce—The Amphitheatre—The Church—Tombs and Effigies—The Drive back.

How difficult it is to go anywhere!

The moment you leave the city walls you are as in a desert without roads. The streets are bad enough inside, but outside—*misericordia!* In this lovely season I propose to take a drive to a village on the low hills some three miles off. Easy enough, you would think, in a town full of carriages. But no, not in Spain! In Triana, over the bridge, I turn to the right into a slough of despond. The thing calls itself *a street.* Heaven save the mark! If rows of the dirtiest, squalidest houses constitute a street, with holes in the road—cavities, rather, into which you might put a wheel-barrow, and ruts—no, not ruts, but rents and gorges of black mud—with children, goats, dogs, and broken-down horses wallowing about among heaps of oranges, chestnuts roasting on charcoal pans, dried fish, and piles of cakes and nuts—then a street! It is fearful to see the heavy carts struggling along, the poor mules straining every muscle, harnessed sometimes twelve to one cart; a visible want of economy, as with a decent road half the number would suffice.

Of course I get out and walk, having some respect for my bones, to say nothing of the horse.

After Triana, we do get on a little better across a causeway, then turn uphill along a zigzag road.

Alas for the poor little half-starved horse which draws me! The hot sun bakes us as if we were reflectors, on the principle of Archimedes and his lens. Up, up, beside a steep bank among olive woods; up, up, the horse panting, steaming, trembling, yet still, poor constant little animal, pulling on! What horses do suffer in Spain is awful! Not that the people are cruel, like the Italians. You seldom see a horse, much less a mule, ill-treated, except at a bull-fight, but by reason of the incredible conglomeration of stone, earth and mud called *roads*. Spain is an old country, and America a new one, but I doubt if any corduroy road in any virgin plantation comes up to this.

About the middle of the ascent again I get out, the broiling sun being exactly at the right angle to give me a sunstroke; yet the poor horse, with unflagging fortitude, is ready to go on.

Geronimo, used to patience and a cigarito, begins to smoke; I, impatient by nature, with a feeling of being imposed upon, pace up and down a narrow ledge of grass.

What bliss to see some natural verdure! Seville is such an arid place! The very weeds about are dear to me, and as to some purple periwinkles, starring a rough bank, I could have kissed them, but for a gulf of mud. Spain is not a country of flowers, like Sicily. It is too dry. Nothing grows without irrigation, and naturally in the dearth that is difficult. In this lay the wisdom of the Moors. They irrigated the four Arab kingdoms of Granada, Cordova, Jaen and Seville, and the ignorant Christians destroyed the work. The earth is capable of anything. If watered it will produce three or four crops a-year. Wonderful land! Heroic, fruitful, but with such a legacy of mediæval mal-government, that like the curse of the malevolent fairy at the Princess's birth, all its rich gifts are marred! If Madrid and its political intrigues of all sorts were swept into the sea, Spain would be a great country.

But I am wandering.

A Spanish village is not a pretty place. Always two

streams of water following each other down two rows of houses, crossed by little arches, invariably broken. The houses, as a rule, one-storeyed, extremely vague as to windows, and with no visible roofs to speak of. No poverty at Castilleja. Open doors show comfortable rooms, not too dirty (in fact, Andalusia is much too Arab to be dirty, either inhabitants or houses); the whole family sitting outside at tables, smoking, gossiping, or singing for lack of thought. Swarthy children staring at you with large dark eyes, and girls with a flower at their ear and gipsy complexions curiously scanning the cut of your dress.

Dogs prevail, also guitars. I do not know the moment when the thrum of a guitar is not audible somewhere. After a good deal of staring on the part of the natives at my bonnet, a solecism in a land of veils, and some wonder on my part that every house should look like its own back, as if no Spanish bricklayer existed capable of inventing a front —I reach the summit of the rise and behold a castle embattled and towered in the Moorish style, belonging to his Highness the Duc de Montpensier, with the adjacent lands; a marriage gift to his daughter, poor Mercedes!

Within these walls died Hernan Cortes, the conqueror of South America, to build up whose renown 100,000 Mexicans perished in the siege.

But he did not escape Nemesis.

'Who are you?' quoth Charles V., with frigid air, when the tall figure of the disgraced man broke through the ranks of courtiers in the halls of the Alcazar.

'I am a man, sire,' was the haughty answer, 'who has given your Majesty more kingdoms than your ancestors had towns.'

When with a cold stare Charles turned from him; his stern heart broke, and he retired to this castle to settle his affairs and die.

. . . . . .

Outside there is an antique garden, grown into a wood with light capricious shade: elm, oak, and plum above, daphne and laurel-rose beneath; moss-grown walks winding among geraniums and fuchsias, and hedges of aloes and prickly pear marking the boundaries beside a mossy fountain. A time-worn ancient place, grey with the weight of

years. No view, no vista, nothing but a garden, and beyond, olives and spiked cactus, in hard blue lines, that softening Nature tames not. Before the house, forgetting its Moorish character on this side, a decaying verandah, entwining roses and jasmine, unswept, uncared-for, thick with falling leaves.

Then, through a door, wide open, into two small chambers, an ante-room between, where stands a homely altar under a raftered roof and plain majolica-tiled walls. Some cabinets, arranged by the Duke, contain memorials of Cortes: the sacramental cup from which he drank when dying; clothes, shoes, gloves and slippers; books bearing upon Mexico, and American costumes. Round the walls hangs his portrait by Murillo and by every other painter and engraver the Duke could find. In armour, in royal robes, as Vice-King of Mexico, as Admiral, as a hunter of lions, and in the simple attire of his latter days—Cortes in all shapes, and under all aspects; placed among helmets, arm-pieces, bucklers protected by a sort of basketwork, a striped banner and a twisted sword, the handle showing rough wear.

His room, with windows high in the wall, turns towards the verandah, darkened by branches of ivy—a place where birds sing freely.

In a recess he died.

. . . . . .

And now for another excursion.

I am off with a fresh party to visit Santi Ponce; two young gentlemen from Mr Johnson's bank to take care of me, and Geronimo, an old soldier, who was 'out' in Cuba under Marshal Serrano, armed, upon the box. Much was said of the badness of this road—that it lay through ploughed fields, and that there were *sequestradores* and robbers. Of the *sequestradores* I can say nothing—there are horrid tales about; but the road was marvellous, the best I have seen in Spain. One or two villages passed of lop-sided aspect, we reach a mediæval rampart of defence, enclosing a grey old pile, nobly domed, which may be fortress, mosque, or church, or all in one. This is Santi Ponce, corrupted from San Geronico, once the old citadel of the old Iberian city which gave birth to Trajan, Adrian and Theodosius—Italica, rival of Bœtica (Seville), founded by Scipio Africanus on the

plain, and adorned by Adrian with the superb architecture of a Roman capital.

Now it sleeps under the soil. The Goths spared it, and made the citadel into a fortified church and convent, with a bishop; the Moors turned this into a mosque, and corrupted the name to Talca. Neither caused its ruin. It was the treacherous Guadalquivir did it this evil turn, by turning aside its current, and the Moors, a thrifty people, too wise to dwell in a waterless city, emigrated to Seville.

. . . . . .

We make a fine appearance to *sequestradores*, should any be about, as we drive by stony ridges, huge blocks and veins of masonry predominating—our coachman in a robin redbreast suit, Geronimo bending his back as if under the weight of armour, and Mr Johnson's smart young men with yellow gloves and glossy hats. Sharp to the left we turn up a lane ending in cyclopean blocks, rent and cloven as if by earthquakes.

Having been threatened with brigands it is consoling to find a most innocent-looking peasant bearing a badge, which he points to with pride, and a fussy dog, who insists on licking our hands.

The rank and fashion with me, and my more humble self, get out, and pass through the hoary clefts of Roman ruins, treading on sweet herbs—thyme, lavender and mint—unused to the foot of man, and sending out sudden whiffs of pungent perfume—and the mighty amphitheatre bursts into sight.

Not so large as the Colosseum, nor so perfect, but more imposing; the tiers of seats nowhere entire, but they are there. The upper podium and cornice (used as a loggia, and lined with booths and eating-tables, where the Lesbias and Dafnes swarmed) is gone, and with it many rows of benches also, but enough remains to render it a mighty monument worthy of great names.

Nor is its lonely desolation without a charm. A sad mourning relic of another world, too far off to compass familiarly, flung on a green upland. Not a tree breaks the lines, not a flower stars the ground; all is dead, or sleeping a deep sleep which knows no awakening.

What fiendish incantations and unnatural offerings, on unknown altars, human sacrifices and bloody libations,

might pass in these silent wilds, and no man be the wiser! The vast space seems given up to the shades of malevolent giants called forth from the tall races of the slain. Forms too horrible for Christian fantasy to compass between heaven and earth, shrouding the light of day; forms such as the simoom calls forth on the burning horizons of African deserts, or the blue mist of the sirocco, when the ebon-visaged kings, followers of Punic Baal, commune with demons!

On our way back we entered the Arab walls surrounding the old church of Santi Ponce, purchased in 1301 by Guzman el Bueno, Duke of Medina, in honour of our Lord. In the church I come upon a succession of lofty mediæval chapels; knights clad in mail recumbent in fretted shrines; superb altar retablos of faded gold; carvings in wood, where the forms of kings, bishops and apostles start life-like from encrusted panels; a monk whose marble face glows in the gloom; the effigy of Dona Urraca Osorio under a Gothic arch (she was one of Don Pedro's victims, whom he actually caused to be *burnt* for not responding to his passion); at her feet the tiny figure of her maid, who perished guarding her, rather than that her chaste person should be exposed (this burning of Dona Urraca is the crowning horror of Peter's reign); and the tomb of the renowned Guzman, Duke of Medina Sidonia, surnamed El Bueno in the Moorish wars, because, rather than yield the strong fortress of Tarifa, which he had sworn to keep one year against the infidels, he sacrificed the life of his only son—a hostage.

'Better honour without a son, than a son with dishonour,' said the stern veteran, and with his own hands he flung from the walls the dagger destined to stab him before his eyes.

El Bueno's tomb was opened in 1570, and his body found entire, nine feet in height.

When we emerge, what a chorus of beggars! They have collected from all quarters while we inspected the church! 'I have a sore here,' cries one. 'I have a wound here,' cries another, displaying a bony shoulder, most unpleasant to behold. 'A broken leg,' groans a patriarch, unbinding an unsavoury limb. 'See my *calentura* (fever)' says a yellow-visaged creature, shaking all over to illustrate his words. 'Behold! I am paralysed,' from an old man, with a voice as out of a tomb.

The blind are led by a dog, or perhaps two, or a child, and scream loudly 'A cuarto (farthing) un perro pequeno, Hermano, por amor de Dios.'

I gave the oldest, a shabby old fellow like a goat, boasting no special disease, but begging for company, a peseta to divide, over which the whole tribe fell to wrangling, each dog joining in fiercely, as if to enforce his master's claim.

We returned home, me and my young friends (become, spite of the yellow gloves, quite jocular and lively), facing a sky of orange colour grown pale, passing in delicate tintings from pink to yellow; the low hills towards the Bay of Cadiz, a transparent blue, shading into purples and lead colour; the boundless plain of Seville faint in the far distance, broken by the rock of Carmona, like an eccentric cloud, backed by the faintest outline of the Sierra Morena; to the west, a bank of fire into which a burning globe descends marking the sunset, amid amaranthine clouds, amber and topaz; the Guadalquivir beneath, a thread of gold, and the flat banks refulgent.

CHAPTER XXII.

SEVILLE TO CADIZ.

Orange-Groves—At Utrera again—Those Everlasting Plains—The Carmona Rock and Count Julian—Jeres de la Frontera—Where are the Vineyards?—The Cartuja Convent—The Guadalette—Death of Roderick—His Name passes into Legend—Puerto de Santa Maria—Its History—Isla de Leon—Approach to Cadiz.

LEAVING Seville by the southern rail, I plunge into an oasis of orange-groves. Not another tree for miles; now this is always grateful.

On the horizon are olive-planted hills alive with game—hares, rabbits, partridges, and snipes—with woodcocks in the gullies; hills spread out behind the city of the plain; a dash of white Cathedral and rosy Giralda tower—rising a beauteous beacon to the skies.

Utrera, where the rail bifurcates to Granada, Malaga, and Cadiz, is a perfect blush of tropical vegetation (Huerta they call it here), so fenced with aloe and cactus, that even an

elephant could not get through, and girded by grey mysterious walls, stately palm avenues, waving laurel rose, straggling figs, hoary patriarchs with nothing verdant about them —and stalwart pomegranates, the *jeunesse* of the woods; the whole a cover for artichokes, egg-plants, tomatoes, tobacco, and endive—all irrigated on the old Moorish plan, with a *noria*, or cistern worked by a mule, setting all the little runnels overflowing. (In the Moslem days all the south was thus irrigated, but water and the Jews went out together when St Ferdinand rode into Seville, and ignorance and superstition came in *en croupe*. It was precisely this fact which Peter the Cruel understood when he allied himself to the Mussulmans and encouraged Israelites in Spain, only his good policy was so discredited by his senseless barbarities that no man esteemed or followed it.)

A ruined Moorish castle, a church domed like a mosque, where the great warrior Ponce de León lies at rest, a statue in full armour over him, and snowy house-fronts—shrouded by geraniums, jasmine and mimosa—'devils' balls' as they are called—make up the town of Utrera. The scent of lavender, rosemary and thyme breathes in from the *campo*, and little restaurants and *casas de comer* tempt the wayfarer; yet short of a tent or a van there is no possibility of lingering. No *posado*, no letable house, no shops. Nothing but beauty and ardent sunshine to be seen.

Alas! this Paradise lasts but for two short stations. Then old Iberia again asserts itself in everlasting plains, at first modified by glimpses of mediæval towers and clustering *quintas*, and bull-ruins with outlook of boundless green pastures, a short pine-tree dotted here and there, the home of those renowned animals destined to make hearts beat and blood flow over the broad face of Spain. I can see bulls like black points on the horizon, roaming fancy free, poor beasts! little suspecting their doom.

People say they like this style of country; I cannot pretend I do.

To the left the dim outline of beautiful Ronda ('there is but one Ronda,' the Spanish say), and the Carmona rock, like Lot's wife, rise out of the fierce plain; Carmona crowned by a feudal castle (only to gaze at it in the blue distance produces infinite relief).

The first act of Count Julian's treason to King Roderick was to besiege this place, bristling with towers and castellations. Hither he came with his African ally, Musa ben Nozier, and was driven back; then to find favour with the great Musa he tried a wily stratagem. At dusk a crowd of what seemed Christian merchants, with a train of mules, knocked at the gate.

'Open,' cried they to the guard; 'open quickly, we bring supplies to the garrison. The Arabs see us, and are in close pursuit.'

Wide flung the gate; the merchants and mules crowd in, and meat and drink are placed before them. Alas! these were no other than Count Julian and his Goths, and at the hour of midnight, silently they stole to what is called the Cordova Gate, and suddenly setting upon the sentinels, put them to the sword and admitted the Africans; a horrible massacre ensued, but the arrival of troops saved the castle; and there it is intact, a graceful outline crowning the valiant town, just as it was left by Peter the Cruel, who kept here his treasure and harem. Maria de Padilla alone lived at the Alcazar.

Then, on a surface flat as your hand, the renowned town of Jerez de la Fronterá (Xerez) rises to view.

Where the sherry comes from is a mystery; not a single vine-plant meets my eye. What humbugs are those rich English merchants! I swear I saw nothing but a big furzy common where races are run. Yet Jerez supplies the world. If the soil is so precious, why not cultivate the ground? But if any vine-juice serves, and sherry is *manufactured* here, as Marsala in Sicily, there is obviously no need.

A more blear-faced town, to my fancy, I never saw. But one Plaza, surrounded by stately palms, and houses with *miradors* and cool patios to keep up the Arab legend.

As to the bodegas or wine-vaults, in which I altogether disbelieve and look upon as necromancy—I did not visit them. It is not possible that the scanty vineyards lying on the further side of Jerez can supply the famous butts named of the 'Twelve Apostles,' 'Napoleon,' 'Methusalem,' etc., each bodega displaying colossal butts, nominally supplied 'by Jerez grapes.'

Wine of Xerez came into England in the reign of Henry

VII. along with young Catherine of Arragon, wife of Prince Arthur, afterwards of his brother, Prince Henry, Henry VIII. Possibly then it was genuine.

I do not stop long to note the wonders of the Cartuja convent, two miles off (once possessing a famous gallery of Zurbarans), with its three great patios, a forest of marble, and yeguada, or breeding-grounds for Andalusian barbs, to which all strangers go, and are fleeced by rapacious drivers (in any other country they would be taken up and fined). Nor do I mount the battlements of the convent to behold boundless flats spreading to the highlands about Gibraltar, but my eye ranges towards the Guadalete (Chrysos of the Roman, Wad-al-leded of the Moors), an insignificant river, but literally overflowing with historic memories.

A great writer has said, 'What is not Moorish in Spain is Gothic.' On the Guadalete, we enter upon the Gothic boundaries, where was fought out that sanguinary strife which brought in the Moslems.

The crime by which Roderick fell was committed at Toledo, but the punishment met him here. To avenge his daughter, Florinda, Count Julian adjured Christ and his King. From Malaga he crossed the straits to Africa to secure the powerful alliance of the Caliph and his generals, hot-blooded Taric the One-eyed, and the great Sheik Muza ben Nozier, who dreamt of nothing but the conquest of all Spain.

'Hitherto,' said Julian, 'we have met as enemies; now I am come to offer you my country and my King.'

They landed at Algeciras, in the Gibraltar Bay, a blood-thirsty host of Berbers and Arabs, eager for Gothic spoil. Don Roderick, seated with his beauteous Queen Exilona in the royal tower at Toledo, asks,—

'What tidings?'

'Of great woe!' exclaims a panting messenger. 'The Rock of Calpe has fallen; I saw our general's head spiked on a Moorish lance. The army has fled.'

At these words Roderick covered his face and sat in silence; then mounting his war-horse, Orelia, he rode forth among his troops assembled on the plains.

A few days' march brought them in sight of the African army on the Guadalete; Taric, Oppas, Muza, Pelistes, and Count Julian in the field.

'O Moslems, conquerors of Africa!' cried Taric, 'you cannot fly. The sea is behind you, the enemy before. Do as I do!' and putting spurs into his steed, he rode full at the Christian host. Two days the fight lasted. On the third, Taric, recognising Roderick by his pointed diadem and purple robe bordered with gold, driving wildly through the ranks in a mule-chariot, inlaid with ivory, fell on him and pierced him through.

With Roderick's death history ends and ballads take up the tale—those same ballads parodied by Cervantes in the second part of Don Quixote, in the inimitable scene of the puppets. When Master Peter, representing Roderick's tragic death, greatly alarmed at the Don's frantic wrath and the drawing of his sword, cries out, 'Hold! hold! Sir Knight, these are no real Berbers nor Moors, but harmless dolls of pasteboard!' Again before the Duchess, when Sancho Panza relates Roderick's sad history, for which 'Master Peter's' authority is again invoked.

Roderick, say the ballads, did not perish in the battle, but seeing that the day was lost to him, he mounted his fleet steed and fled. But not for far; the sleek-skinned Orelia, bleeding with wounds to death, soon fell. Then the King wandered on foot, faint and sick, his sword hacked into a saw, his jewelled mail drilled through.

On the top of the highest rise (that is not much, for we are in the eternal plains) Roderick sits down and weeps. Wherever he gazes death meets him. His valiant Goths have fallen or have fled; the Guadalete runs blood. No refuge left in the walled cities, nor by the sea-shore; Toledo, his capital, is far away, and who knows if his banner still floats from its grim towers?

Below is the battlefield, stained with Christian blood. His royal banner trails in the dust, his dying host carpets the plain. The shrill cry of the Arab comes sharply to his ear. He can discern the form of Count Julian, sword in hand, dealing destruction to such as still linger, and Taric on his Arab courser, white turbaned, more terrible than the Black Kings which haunt the desert.

Just, however, as Roderick in despair is about to kill himself (so the ballad continues), a shepherd appears, who gives the fainting King food, and conducts him to a neighbour-

ing hermit. The hermit, on learning who he is, regards him somewhat dubiously, and begins by exhorting him to pray and purify himself from sin. As to hospitality, he can only offer him an open grave, into which Roderick descends without a murmur, in company with a big black snake. If his repentance is sincere, the hermit tells him the snake will leave him harmless; if not, he will bite.

In the grave the King lies silent for three days. On the third the hermit appears and asks, 'How fares it, most noble King, and how do you relish your dark bed and dismal bedfellow?'

'The snake,' answers Roderick, 'is black, and rears its crest, but it does not bite me. Pray for me, good father, that I may lie unharmed.'

But that very afternoon, sore and doleful moans smite the hermit's ear. It is Roderick from the grave crying, 'Father, father, the snake eats me! he gnaws me! Now—now I feel his pointed teeth; O God, will it soon end?'

At which the hermit, gazing down, exhorts him to bear the pain, to save his sinful soul, in the true style of monkish consolation.

So poor Roderick dies a miserable death, verifying what Sancho Panza says to the Duchess, that 'all the Goth's silks and riches did not prevent his being cut off,' and the traitor and renegade, Count Julian, helps the Moors to possess Jerez and the plain from Seville to the rock of Gibraltar, called Tarik Gebal, hill of Tarik, which they kept for many centuries, until driven out by Alonso the Wise, King of Leon and Castile.

Next to Jerez comes Puerto de Santa Maria, in a spongy marsh, cut by canals and water-courses.

At the station a river runs seaways, and desolation broods, spite of an English consul and an English chaplain to boot (in what desolation will an English chaplain, invariably with a delicate wife and a large family of healthy children, not turn up?)'

Puerto de Santa Maria, God-forsaken as it looks, has also a history.

In happier times, before mud and slime encroached, and barricades and embankments still held the oozing streams, it was a port, not only in name, but in deed. (I do not

see it, but we are close to the sea, and the guides say the wharfs and walls were founded by Isabel the Catholic.)

What arrogance! As if Isabel founded a port where Carthaginian Mago moored his fleet before sailing to Syracuse, and Cæsar kept his long galleys to intimidate Pompey at Bœtica! Here Drake and Essex landed, and the French ships from Trafalgar took refuge in Nelson's time.

You may not believe it, but all the South of Spain must be accepted on faith; nowhere more than in these water-logged flats, a mysterious land, half sea, half shore, dropping asunder, as it were, out of sheer old age and weariness.

Looking far afield, I call to mind the great temple of Hercules upon this barren coast, remembered by the Moors as 'the district of idols;' and that perhaps Gades, the city of Hercules, stood here on the site of the Puerto, where great yawning foundations were laid bare in 1755, the water retiring inland before the upheaving of a mighty earthquake.

Nor have I done with Hercules. Bordering the low-lying sea-board, neither Atlantic nor Mediterranean, but between the two, is the Isla de Leon, a tract of grazing land given by Queen Isabella to Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, as a reward for his prowess in the siege of Granada.

Now this Isla is the very spot (Tartesus of the ancients, Tarshish of Scripture) where that fine old sea-salt Geryon, the 'Stranger' of the Hebrews, whom the Ponces claim as an ancestor, lived, and like Norval 'fed his flocks, a frugal swain,' also those fat Bœotian oxen so basely lifted by Hercules. Nor is it to be forgotten how near we are to the Club-God's pillars (the *ne plus ultra* of Charles V.), old landmarks between two spheres, one at Calpe (Gibraltar) the other at Abyla in Africa (the ancient mind could grasp nothing further), now Ceuta. The Romans called Hercules' Pillars 'Keys.' Beyond, the Imperial arms never ventured, and they bore them as the *claviculum* of the earth. Charles V. carried them on his shield, bound by a blue ribbon 'proper,' and Cadiz bears Hercules wrestling with a lion as its crest.

Just as I feel at the end of all things, a beautiful deep blue sea-line upheaves upon the flat, dark turrets break on stony shores, and rows of low-faced buildings announce the entrance to Cadiz. I pass along a narrow causeway, with

the sensation that nothing but a watery death awaits me, and to my delight draw up at a station. Stranger still, an omnibus is waiting, and a guard who salutes me with 'Dios guarde á usted.'

There are peeps of rounding shores bristling with ramparts, and a vision of innumerable little boats tossing on purple waves, some rowing, some sailing, all inexpressibly joyous, and beyond, a fleet of great vessels—steamers, yachts and merchantmen—swaying on rocky breakers.

In a moment I have passed a fortified gateway among a crowd of red and blue soldiers, and am engulfed in a net of glaring white streets, painfully clean (the Spaniards call Cadiz, Taza de Plata, *silver dish*), through light pleasant squares full of seats and flowers, all looking as painfully modern as if Cadiz (eleven thousand years old, the tin-mart of Albion, amber-field of Norsemen, Giulia Augusta of Cæsar, and Kadis of the Moor) had just started into life, at the command of some Liverpool or Manchester firm running steamers—and pull up at the Hotel de Cadiz. Not a bad house by any means, only, who in the world cares to come to Cadiz?

CHAPTER XXIII.

CADIZ.

The Alameda—View from Torre Vigier—Church of Los Capuchinos—Palladian Cathedral—Dragon Tree—Hospitals—Poverty and Politics—Madhouse, etc.—Fishmarket—Dulness of Cadiz.

I RETRACT! Not quite so bad, after all! I have seen my friends the English consul and his wife. Any place they inhabit must be nice; they permeate an atmosphere—only a town out at sea, just tacked on to mother earth by the narrowest of isthmuses, walled, and gated, and guarded, and as compact and dapper as white-wash and paint can make it, is not precisely what I should choose. But I will not be spiteful. The streets are well-paved. The Alameda on a pretty sea-wall looks to the bay; but it is stiff, and rustles with statues and marble balustrades. On the opposite horn of the bay you see the houses of Saint Lucar, where the

Guadalquivir *débouches* to the sea, and the Montpensiers have a fine palace. All round the formal little city you can walk on ramparts, and recreate yourself with immensity. Give me a week at Cadiz and I should die!

I went to the top of the Torre Vigier and saw it all—the city, a white dab in a blue-green sea—and I felt that I should infallibly cast myself from the summit if I remained.

There is only one church worth seeing—Los Capuchinos, with four Murillos (and they are fine). It was while working at the altar-piece here—the marriage of St Catherine—that Murillo fell from the scaffolding and injured himself so seriously that he returned to Seville to die.

Here also is his St Francis receiving the stigmata, pathetic enough to draw tears—and a *replica* of the great canvas of St Anthony in Seville, out of which the figure of the Saint was cut, despatched to America and returned.

With what interest one traces the workings of the painter's mind in the reproducing of the same subject: just as a poet's fancy clings to a theme he loves, and a musician's fingers wander in various keys to a favourite motive,—so lingered Murillo among the saints and angels.

Painting at Cadiz, he was already in middle life; already he mellowed and refined rather than created (or was he ever a creator in the highest sense?); his taste matured; his soul purified from beggars and disease, to the glorification of the Divine Child and youthful Virgin.

The Palladian Cathedral, built after the battering given to Cadiz by Lord Essex in Queen Elizabeth's time, engulfs you like a Grecian mausoleum; possibly, anywhere else, it might be imposing, but in the Moresque south it 'screams' like a harsh note of music.

What pleased me most was a dragon-tree (*draconia*), fifty feet high, in the Botanical Garden. I shall never forget it; the weirdest, uncanniest thing I ever beheld—a demon inside it, surely, writhing in torments!

Nor must I forget the hospitals, which I visited with the Consul.

There is nothing in Spain like the charity of Cadiz. El Hospicio de Cadiz is a home for the decent poor, *criadas* (young women) out of place, a school for children, and an asylum for old age; no painful separation of sexes, nor cold-

blooded officialism, but a shelter where poverty can dwell at peace in the untroubled atmosphere of courteous Spain.

P— addressed the superintendent nun as 'the angel Garcia'—a gentle, self-sustained matron, coming and going softly with her keys.

About the ancient doors of another excellent asylum—the Casa de Hermanos—gather old Pescadores de la Mar, with fur caps and naked feet; Guardias Civiles, like overgrown blue-bottles, and helpless *ancianos* with the everlasting cry, 'Una limosna por Dios,' staring stolidly into the patio permeated with tropical perfumes, and bordered with agaves, set in great porcelain pots—with a comfortable sense that if ill they will be taken in, if dead, buried.

The Casa de Hermanos is a private benevolence of special citizens. It makes up a hundred of the sweetest and cleanest of beds, and the Sisters of St Vincent de Paul serve it.

'Ah, noble Señor,' said a thin old man, sitting in one of the wards, taking his spectacled eyes off a newspaper and addressing himself to P— (everyone reads newspapers, and is a politician here), 'you are Ingleses; we have liberty now with the Left in, like you. The finest Government in the world; but the Caballero Ministers neglect the poor. Give me a *perro* to buy tobacco, and I am at your feet' (this in a parenthesis). 'I get no more allowance now than with Canovas and the Right, though the Left did promise us everything.'

This 'promising everything' was exactly what Castelar found so troublesome when he was Republican Dictator; the kindest-hearted of men, with his broad disc of face and shining bald head, he and his party had been promising all their lives (whilst in opposition) everything to everybody; promises which, when he came into office, he found it impossible to keep, causing thereby immense indignation on the part of Socialists, and disgust and retirement for himself.

A madhouse (Casa de Locos) is located in an old convent.

Here P— saluted with much respect a soft-faced Hermana de Cariad with a white hood, who, proudly pointing out that each *loco* or *loca* had a separate bedroom and all manner of little luxuries, asked him if they did better in his country.

The Spanish law forbids harbouring the insane at home; but laws, we know, however excellent, are not always followed, especially in Spain.

At the Government Hospital, whoever rings the bell is admitted upon payment of a quarter of a franc a day. The only drawback is that soldiers and civilians are mixed together. P— ventured to insinuate to the official that this was a mistake.

'We do not like changes,' was the reply, with a grave, determined air; 'our fathers knew best—*vaya con Dios*,' a civil way of saying, 'Get along with you for an impertinent meddler.'

There is also a Casa de Misericordia and Casa de Viudas (widows) all in this little white-robed city.

Let the rest of Spain 'go and do likewise.'

The fishmarket, down at the sea-gate, is a great institution for those proof against bad smells and dirt. These, taken in conjunction with the uncouth hideousness of the fish, somewhat overcame me; but the Criada, with a creel poised on her magnificent hair, a short red or yellow petticoat, and sandled feet, shouting out her ware, is picturesque enough, and the young *pescador*, her lover, singing 'La! la! la!' in the shade, no less so.

The *pescador* glories in his waistband (*faja*) of a glaring tint, a dagger in the folds. If cold, he covers his head like a Catalan, not with a hat—the sombrero is honourable, and not to be found at the sea-gate—but with any kind of gaudy rag he can put his hand upon.

He is a fine fellow, the *pescador*, and often sails on dangerous seas as far as Cape Finisterre. It is a pity his game should be so unworthy; I never tasted a fish in Spain which was worth the cooking.

Here, too, crowd beggars in ragged *capas*, smoking as they beg; and waifs generally puddling at the water's edge, or gathering round a large chafing-dish, although the day is hot.

Looking at this stalwart *jeunesse* at the sea-gate, and calling to mind the light forms of the veiled ladies undulating through the streets, I remember that it was from Cadiz the Romans imported those dances called 'Improbæ Gaditana,' of which I have spoken. All things considered, I am glad I came to Cadiz. The climate is softer and warmer than Seville; a delicious seaboard flavour, too, only such a confluence of oceans can supply, but the dulness, like Egyptian darkness, is *to be felt!*

CHAPTER XXIV.

SEVILLE TO MALAGA.

Miles of Olives—Osuna—Utrera—Fellow-Travellers—La Ronda—Bobadilla—Gobantes—Valley of Alora—Still the Plains—Aspect of Malaga—Alhama—Velez Malaga—The Alameda Hotel—The Cathedral and the Prefecture—A Cool Prefect—An Ingenious Method of Unloading—The Prefect and the Mob again—The Citadel—Its History—Moor Hamet and Christian Ferdinand—Fiordalinda, Count Julian and Don Roderick—View from the Mole—A Detestable City—Return to Seville.

A WEARY journey over endless plains, now green and fertile with young vine and olive grounds—miles and miles of olives—the Bœticim olives are the finest, being as large as eggs, and soft and delicious. Nothing is so dull as a fertile country.

Above is Osuna, climbing up a triangular hill with a Gothic castle and cathedral at the summit, giving its title to the great Duque, ten times Grand d'Espagne. (Osuna, daughter of Hispan, married to Phyrus—he of Epirus perhaps?—a 'killer of wild boars;' hence the city arms—a castle with two boars chained, and the motto, 'Labour Osuna.')

About here the country makes a feeble effort to rise into low hills—after Seville, a rarity on which to feast one's eyes—but 'there is nothing in it,' as Lord Dundreary says, and the castle-cathedral fades out against a blue-yellow sky in inarticulate distances.

On, on, on, upon a respectable deliberate rail, doing its duty Spanish-fashion, through more olives and more corn, stretching into incalculable dimnesses.

Here and there a station with its group of peasants in mushroom hats and red waist-scarfs; watercans, oranges, and wine in pigskins (like decapitated negroes) lying on the platform, all—men, oranges, and pigskins—to be shovelled into the train, which goes off without a bell, a whistle, or any kind of warning, quite arbitrary and according as the conductor has, or has not smoked his cigarette or found acquaintances.

At Utrera, our first halt, there is a restaurant, and some

most enticing cutlets were brought into the carriage by a Belgian family and eaten with beer.

A jolly set these Belgians, two married pairs; one elderly, big-teethed, brown-faced and bulky, the others slim and young, good people, who eat, drink, and sleep—*voilà tout.* They are going to Granada, they say, to repeat, I presume, the same process under heroic walls. Yet their heavy good-humour is contagious. *That* they carry with them, if nothing else, and good temper is so pleasant, I accept it even with vacuity.

Why do such people travel? is the question. In the next compartment sit a mysterious lady and gentleman all alone; they must have paid for eight seats—great aristocrats, I thought, until I saw them; then I decided they were only a pair of English snobs, the man with a blue veil.

I would have forgiven them, only they foisted their two servants on us.

The courier quarrelled with me about the window, which indeed drew my attention to him as not being a gentleman, and the maid knitted and read French novels.

Good-natured as the Belgians were, they did not like the servants, and the excellent woman with two rows of teeth, like the Wolf-grandmother who eat up Red Riding Hood, said so to her spouse, then took a glass of beer and fell asleep.

I sat wondering what these people would think of the Alhambra and the mystery of the open hand over the Arab portal of justice?

At La Roda, all on a hideous flat, we met the train from Cordova, and a very splendid train it is, with two saloon carriages, carved and gilt, of impressive magnitude and exceeding comfort.

On this line there are so many changes—Seville to Malaga, and Granada, and Cordova ditto, and back to Madrid; everyone is frantically asking everyone else, where they are! and what they are to do—making rushes from one train to the other, until a solemn-faced Spaniard stops them with a stern monosyllable, which, as no one speaks Spanish, is quite thrown away.

Several rushes of this kind were made—I foremost in the *mêlée*—and stopped in this manner before we start. As there is nothing to look at outside, we stare at each other.

At Bobadilla the train finally separates, one-half for Granada among bare heights, the other for Malaga, in the saloon. This I share with an Austrian family, of which the chief is ill of a headache—*heartache*, I think, from the attention paid his pretty wife by a young conqueror; the chief, an elderly man, 'grisled' like Hamlet's papa as he appeared upon the battlements of Elsinore, and past his prime.

However, the 'ache,' whatever it is, recalls the young wife to duty and grey hair on one side of the saloon, to the momentary extinction of the young hero on the other, who, disgusted with things in general, takes out a book and reads.

(It was quite a little drama, the husband as usual getting the worst without knowing it, and *madame se laissant desirer* by both.)

Then we dash into some fine rocky scenery about Gobantes, near Ronda; cliffs clefted thousands of feet deep, vermilion coloured and splintered as with a knife; old fortresses and towers upright among the clouds, a dashing river thundering below, over which we dash likewise, through a general conglomeration of subterraneans and tunnels.

But this picturesque excitement could not be long sustained by dear monotonous old Spain. It was only a convulsion, and soon cooled down into plains.

There is no sustained grandeur of scenery; it is as uncongenial to the character of the people as to the face of nature.

Gobantes is the station for the Moorish stronghold of Ronda, the Tivoli of the south ('there is but one Ronda' says the guide-book); the town divided by a cleft (*tajo*) 350 feet deep, through which the Guadalvin foams.

I speak second-hand. At this time of year, in the month of March, I would not have gone there for the world, among snow and ice and bare trees. No, not to behold the African scimitar of Rolin which cleft the rock in twain, a repetition of Le brave Roland's Durindana in the Pyrenees—strange how these traditions repeat themselves!

I was surprised, however, to see my Austrians keep their seats at Ronda among the rocks. Youth could have distanced Age, and people who come from Ischl cannot fear cold.

The valley of Alora is tropically pretty, but not equal to the Riviera. Like the mountain fastnesses of Gobantes, it lasts but briefly. A few half-ruined villas, buried among

citron groves, pomegranates with trembling brown leaves, pepper-trees quivering in the light, fuchsias grown into shrubs, and outhouses full of oranges ready for the railway trucks—that is all.

Again we are in the universal plain, with the usual results of weariness. The husband's head still aches; the lady abstains from giving one look towards her sulky cavalier, still reading in a corner, and we near Malaga, beside a purple sea-line and huge red chimneys.

Now let me remark that the rocky range I have mentioned —really splendid as to scenery, and of a ruddy tint, as if the Moorish blood so freely shed there still clung to the soil—is much too far in the background to influence the aspect of Malaga; also that the environs are as flat and swampy as Spanish heart can wish.

Some one said: 'Nothing at Malaga but the Wilkinsons' (the English consul and his wife). To this I agree.

They are charming people, but it is no compliment to couple them with Malaga, where, as there is nothing, *nothing* is the result. A horrible place! I should like to swear! A beastly place! I *will* swear! Shall it be in Spanish or Italian?

All sun, dirt, traffic, merchant ships, bad smells, mule-bells, rattling wheels, screams, shouts, ugliness and dust!

Oh for sweet little Cadiz, beside this unnatural emptiness! Cadiz, a white lily flung on a sapphire sea, with its terraced ramparts, Alameda, statues and sea-gates, trim Dutch streets, and grand white houses—I maligned you!

Malaga to Cadiz is as 'Hyperion to a Satyr' (I am quite in the vein for quoting Hamlet). Malaga is a horrid place! Avoid it, ye thousands of travelling British! Think not of it! Sponge it out, and cast it from you as a pot-sherd! A place without shadow or a bench to sit upon, a morsel of green, a picturesque wall, a monument, or any vestige of antiquity or beauty—not so much as a weed, much less a flower on which the eye can rest; all noise, wind, glare, with a long line of jutting capes on a sea-line towards Velez Malaga and Alhama.

Alhama! How softly that Orient name trembles on the tongue. The echo of that plaintive cry, 'Ay de mi Alhama!' rising out of the depths of buried centuries!

Yes, there are the walls of Moorish Alhama, high among serried mountain-tops, running off inland towards Loja and Granada—poised in a rent among inaccessible precipices, backed by Sierras of eternal snow. For its emblem, a castle and two keys, as one of the keys of the kingdom of Granada —a key sure locked and fast, but which could not keep out the gallant Marquis of Cadiz, Ponce de Leon, and when he entered, the desolation of the Moors found voice in that cry, bitterer than the Hebrew captives' lament 'by the waters of Babylon.'

Below, along the coast, where the blue sea bounds in, fresh in snowy billows, is Velez Malaga, eighteen miles distant, the white houses plainly visible in the clear air; and Velez Malaga—a most romantic place, folded up in mountain fastnesses—has also its dismal history during the Moorish wars.

Besieged by Ferdinand in person, with his own royal hand he killed a man, and was so contented with his prowess, that he gave the conquered town his own effigy on horseback spearing the infidel. Thus did they fight in those days, mixing chivalry with a cruelty we should now disdain towards the lowest animals.

Alas! look not now for Moors or butchering kings at Velez Malaga—nothing but the sugar manufactory of the Marquis Larios, and oranges. Yes, the orange has conquered Time.

. . . . . .

I wrote this yesterday, I confirm it to-day. A more detestable place than Malaga I never visited. The Alameda, so-called—meaning a leafy avenue—is dry gravel, with sticks planted in it the size of fingers.

The streets are ugly, the aspect bastard—neither Moorish nor Spanish, African, Western nor Eastern, Turkish, Hindoo nor Chinese.

Malaga!—What a type! And a population the most bloodthirsty in Spain!

The climate I thought most unpleasant—a burning sun, with much wind, assailing you everywhere—a rude boisterous wind; swarms of mosquitoes, against which no precaution is taken, so that you are not only stung all day in the month of March, but kept awake all night with that dreadful purr, as of the vicious insect rejoicing in its power. The Alameda Hotel, bad, dear, and dirty (it has a marble staircase, that

is all), the service abominable, and the food worse—a caravansera where no one stays who can help it.

I am particular in mentioning all this, because there is a false idea of Malaga afloat—a *prestige*, a *fad* about it and its climate. Even the Wilkinsons cannot make it nice! Malaga is not Spain any more than Nice is Italy. (They tell me Barcelona and Malaga are the richest cities in Spain.)

I can answer for what I know, that the habits of the people are as ugly as the town. On an average, two assassinations take place a day.

This is pretty strong, I think, also to be disturbed at night by the whistle of those dear, dark-mantled Serenos wandering about, a lamp at their waistband, one whistle answered by another, making quite a concert at dead of night.

The whistles continuing bring out the Guardias Civiles—those charming military red-breasts, the most reliable men in Spain. Without the Serenos and the Guardias, Spain would not be Spain.

But to return.

Two objects 'give in the eye,' obtruding themselves everywhere—the Cathedral, of the very worst period of Italian Gothic (I fled from it as from a pest), and the Prefecture—an enormous white box pierced with rows of windows. Z—, the volatile, the gay, was Prefect here, and as I looked at the gaunt windows glaring round to all parts of the compass, I wondered where Donña Maria put up when she was here, and if any corridor was long enough to drown the voice of the young Joaquin.

Like Barcelona and Marseilles, Malaga is full of revolutions, a place taking advantage of any change to get up a shindy just for the love of it. On one occasion, the Prefect, without more ado, bound on his municipal scarf and strode down quite alone to the Plaza Major. There he stood under an arch and frowned at the tumult, which frowned back at him. Not a Guardia near him, and cannons out and knives gleaming, to say nothing of the awful faces of grimy insurgents.

When he had frowned enough—I am not sure he did not twist up a cigarette and smoke it in their faces—he very deliberately turned about and returned home.

Afterwards, he was told everything was prepared to assassi-

nate him—not him *individually*, but as the representative of law. His pluck saved him. Had he carried any arms they would have shot him down in a moment. Nor was this all.

Malaga is a place by the sea, and all the great merchants own steamers of their own, to transport goods at an enormous profit. Unfortunately, the profit is much diminished by the custom-house, so the art of the thing is to get the steamers unladen for nothing. One mercantile gentleman was specially clever. With one or two steamers lying in the offing, laden with contraband, he had an ingenious way of paying the roughs in the town (and their name is legion) to cry, 'Viva la Republica! Abajo el Gobierno,' until a huge mob collected, and to the mob coming, more or less, all the town, and the Guardia Civil, and the officials and garrison generally, into the Great Plaza and the adjacent streets, the whole coast was left bare and unguarded, when my gentleman runs in his steamers, unloads his goods, and leaves the inhabitants to fight it out.

The gentleman in question had repeated this little game with such singular success, he had become very wealthy, and naturally most orthodox in his personal opinions and conduct, to drown suspicion.

Whilst Z— is Prefect the same thing occurs. Steamers are anchored outside the bar, and a regular *pronunciamiento* is taking place inside, with the usual result of filling the city and leaving the coast free.

But this time the gentleman reckoned without his host: that valiant little Z— knew his game, and marked him. As the roars of the rioters rise up to the Prefecture, Z— rings his bell and desires a soldier to take his compliments to the wealthy gentleman, requesting his immediate attendance at the Prefecture.

The wealthy gentleman arrives, hat in hand, fat, florid, and unctuous, with an aspect of unblemished honour and a halo of respectability—*à toute épreuve.*

'What does his most esteemed and beloved friend the Prefect want?' he asks blandly, while at the open window curses and execrations, howls and shrieks, rise in the air.

'My dear friend,' says Z—, who wears the official scarf, 'I have sent for you to say that if this mob does not at once disperse I intend to shoot you; I have told off a couple of

soldiers to do it. I give you two hours. In that time you can communicate with whom you like, always under guard. If in two hours the town is not absolutely quiet, you will die.'

'What!' cries the wealthy gentleman, pale with rage. 'You dare to use such language to me? Are you aware of your responsibility? What reason can you give? My position, my family! Do you know what you do?'

'Perfectly,' answers Z—, with a dry little laugh, sticking his fingers into his scarf; 'I take all responsibility upon myself.'

In two hours' time Malaga was silent as Erebus, and the wealthy gentleman, much shaken in his nerves, eating his dinner at home, his steamers still balancing themselves in the offing.

Only, instead of realising a fortune, as other Prefects do at Malaga, Z— left it poorer than he went.

Besides the Cathedral, there is the citadel or Alcazaba, a yellow ruin crowning a rock over the rolling main, and there it has stood since the time of the Moorish Wars, Malaga being one of the most important of the Moslem cities, and just as rich and commercial, and in the power of opulent merchants, as it is now.

In those days lived a certain Ali Dordux answering to the wealthy gentleman above, and looking more to his money bags than aught else. On the approach of Ferdinand's army, Ali called a meeting of the citizens, and so urged upon them the misery of a siege and the loss that would attend all commerce, that it was decided he himself should ride to the Christian camp and make submission. And ride he did, Ali Dordux, but in departing he counted without his host, for no sooner was he gone than a tough old Mussulman, Hamet Eli, in the town, gathered round him a band of true believers, who like so many war-hawks perched themselves on the Alcazaba to prevent, as they said, 'The degradation of Mussulmen to a Christian dog.'

'Still,' says old Hamet, a formidable buccaneer, 'let us proceed cautiously against these sordid merchants.' So he secretly entered the citadel, put to death all the garrison, and invited the citizens to a parley—they coming most speedily, with the idea that Ali Dordux had returned with favourable conditions from Ferdinand.

Imagine their dismay when on mounting the steep ascent they find themselves face to face with old Hamet and his grim African guard.

'Who,' says Hamet, 'is loyal and Moslem?'

'All!' answer the affrighted citizens, in terror of their lives.

'Then prove it by defending Malaga to the last!'

All swear they will.

'Enough!' says Hamet, a man scarce of words. 'Name a commander capable of the task.'

'Yourself,' reply the merchants.

Of course the news of these doings came to King Ferdinand, as also a Moorish knight, who offered to betray old Hamet. 'Command my purse,' were the King's words. But gold would not move old Hamet. Then King Ferdinand and his army sat down seriously before Malaga. Nor is there a more bloody siege in all the cruel annals of those wars. The leader of the Christians was Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, and his battery, seven old guns, called 'The Seven Sisters of Ximenes.' 'The sisters' made a breach, and the Moors, though gallantly fighting, were forced to give way.

Still Hamet would not yield. The horror of famine was added to other woes, but he moved not.

At length the wealthy merchant, Ali Dordux, who in the meantime had returned, and even donned a shield to defend the city in a general way, feeling his heart yearn for his fellow-citizens and for his well-filled purse, betrayed gallant old Hamet, who fell beneath the walls. The moral of the whole being that Malaga, from the time of the Phœnicians until now, lives under the sway of merchants who love gold.

Florinda, too, is here.

In the first paroxysm of her despair, from Toledo she wrote to Count Julian, 'Would to God that the earth had opened and swallowed me up. Alas! my father, thy lamb entrusted to the lion has been dishonoured. Hasten to rescue me!'

Then to a faithful page, 'Saddle thy steed,' she said, giving him the letter, 'and ride for thy life until thou hast placed this in Count Julian's hands.'

'Trust me, fair maiden,' said the page, 'I will not turn aside.'

Count Julian was at Ceuta, which he had just conquered.

'What tidings of King Roderick?' asked he, as he opened the letter.

'None, my lord.'

As Count Julian read, his face darkened.

'Thus,' cried he, tearing the letter asunder and flinging it to the winds, 'I am rewarded for serving a tyrant! Infamy rest on my name if I avenge not my daughter.'

But he spoke no word, his first object being to remove his family from Toledo and the power of the King.

With these deadly purposes at heart he crossed to Spain and repaired to Toledo. Wherever he appeared he was hailed as the victorious general he was. Roderick loaded him with favours, making atonement for the deadly wrong done to the daughter by honours to the father.

Count Julian, meanwhile, artfully arranged his plans, magnified the dangers which threatened the frontier, and prepared all things for his return to Africa. For Florinda he obtained leave of absence from the Queen, to attend upon her mother, the Countess Frandina, dangerously ill at Algeciras.

As Count Julian crossed the bridge of the Tagus, followed by a shouting populace, Florinda, pale and weeping, beside him on a palfrey, he raised his mailed hand and shook it at the royal palace of Don Roderick: 'A father's curse rest on thee and thine. May desolation fall on thy dwelling and thy realm!'

Journeying thus with Florinda, he came to a wild range of rock mountains near Consucara, still called 'The Mountain of Treason,' because it was here he met his wicked brother Oppus, Bishop of Seville, and his wife Frandina.

'Perdition light on thee,' she cried, gazing at Florinda, prostrate at her feet, 'if thou submit to this outrage!'

'Be satisfied,' replied Count Julian, 'she shall be avenged. Oppus, my brother, will bind our friends by dreadful oaths; I myself will go to Africa to seek Great Muza, and negotiate for his aid.'

From Malaga Count Julian embarked for Africa with Frandina and Florinda, his treasure and his household, abandoning the country of his birth, and ever since the gate in the city wall through which they passed is called 'Puerta

de la Cava' (Gate of the Harlot), by which name unhappy Florinda was known among the Moors.

Nor have I done with this miserable girl at Malaga. Returning to this castle in after years with her parents, and accusing herself as the cause of all the miseries of the disastrous wars which expelled the Goths from Spain, her wretchedness increased to such a pitch, that one day, walking in the old Castle garden, she entered a tower, barred the door, and ascended to the battlements. Here, looking wide afield, she clasped her hands, and cried, 'Let this city be henceforth called *Malacca*, in memory of me;' and she threw herself headlong from the tower and was dashed to pieces on the stones.

This was the end of poor Florinda, the innocent cause of many woes. Of Count Julian and Frandina I shall speak later.

. . . . . .

I walked down to the Mole and the lighthouse. Not a seat, not a bench, nor even a beneficent wall-corner. Mercy on us! Dust, glare, and tearing wind, the blue sea rushing in and the white dust rushing out.

Many fine vessels rode in the harbour, and there was a vast deal of going and coming in boats, full of convicts to penal settlements on the African coasts—convenient to kill troublesome folks, but nothing more.

There is no reason why Malaga should be so odious. Standing on the Mole, there is a grand outlook of mountains—jagged enough to be absolutely dolomitic—with town after town, white walled, dipping into the sea, and on the rugged mountain sides, nestling villages, towers, and villas, each villa with its dark patch of wood against a yellow-purple background—the property of the merchant princes who know how to run steamers. But nothing would make me like it, not even the Wilkinsons.

It is such a detestable climate! (In Southern Spain, absolute absence of winter counts for nothing.)

Certainly the merchant princes might make Malaga more tolerable. As it is, they simply treat it as a port and office, good for *pronunciamientos* and politics, and live among the hills.

I returned home with the Austrians, and soon found my-

self, in spite of weariness, involuntarily assisting at the continuation of the little drama of which I spoke. They were all playing their parts exactly as before. The old husband still with his headache; the young cavalier still unobtrusively devoted to the handsome young wife, and she, on her part, though silent, holding eloquent converse with her eyes. To me, as a passive spectator, it passed the time, and I had just worked it all out in my own mind into a harrowing *dénouement*, when the train stopped at Seville.

CHAPTER XXV.

FAREWELL TO SEVILLE.

En route to Cordova—Spanish Travellers—Stories and Conversation by the Way.

I HAVE only time to note that, on leaving the Hotel Madrid, Maria, the *criada*, laid forcible hands on me, and kissed me on both cheeks. (I believe she stole my gold brooch, but let that pass.) The waiters surrounded me in the patio to shake hands, and a tear moistened the good Antonio's eye. When they *are* cordial the Spaniards everwhelm you!

At the station I got into a carriage alone, then, remembering I had been expressly warned against doing so, got out again and found myself among a party of natives.

'It is not safe to be alone,' said I, as a kind of introduction, addressing them all round.

'No, not at all. The Señorita is most welcome; where will she sit?'

Then began a conversation, very loud and very screamy, which lasted all the way to Cordova, three hours. (There was a man, his wife, and another man; I do not believe they had ever met the other man before, but the way they fraternised was amazing. The wife, full of Andalusian graces, the husband, a muff, who only smoked.) Like the Austrians, the talk was between *her* and *the other*, a lawyer perhaps, or a merchant, or a bagman, something certainly active in mind and body; a masterful man, with great black eyes turned upon the lady, who twisted her little head in a captivating way.

To me, as a stranger, requiring a little attention, the dark man from time to time related anecdotes as if I were a child.

'Santa Lucia,' he said, 'believed by the country people to be the mother of the Lord, "wanted a country." She had intimated this in the courts of heaven, and had received permission to choose one to her taste. Wandering through the earth, she came into Spain. The north did not please her, then a voice from on high said, "*Anda, Lucia*" (Go, Lucia), and she went and went until she came to the south coast. Here she tarried, and the country is called after her, "Andalucia."'

Then the dark man went on to tell another story.

'Once,' said he, quite gravely, 'I cannot tell you when, our Lord, St Peter and St John were walking along a road.

'"Why don't you marry, Peter?" says our Lord.

'"At my age, Master?"

'"Yes."

'"But who would have me?"

'"The first woman we meet," was the answer.

'They came up with a woman, ill favoured, and covered with dust; a farm servant with dirty legs.

'"Well, Peter, does she suit you?"

'"Not at all, Master; she never shall be my wife. She is not even young."

'"Well, since your are so difficult, you shall try again."

'"The next person they met was an old hag, leaning on a stick, hollow jawed, with deep sunk watery eyes. As He looked on her our Lord smiled and turned to Peter.

'"See! there is another wife."

'"Never!" cried Peter, horrified, turning away his head.

'On they went,' continued the dark man, with an eye on the charmer in the corner, inclined to be shocked, but greatly amused, 'and a third woman appeared. She had a hump, was blind, and had a mouth full of long black teeth; a perfect horror. Poor Peter gave a deep sigh, but said nothing.

'"This one," said our Lord, "you are bound to have; in the next town we will marry you."

'On they go, the old witch after them, delighted to have found a husband to her mind. Thus they came to a forge, when our Lord, addressing the blacksmith, said,—

'"Will you please let me try my hand?—I know the trade a little."

'"Certainly, señor, but you must imitate me—I am a master blacksmith."

'"Stand aside," said our Lord to the smith's mother, who stood beside the forge. Then, taking the bride of St Peter by the head, He threw her into the fire.

'"Wicked man, what are you doing?" cried the smith.

'"Let me alone," was the answer; "I know my trade."

'St Peter, greatly relieved, saw the old sorceress put into the fire. But after a while our Lord, who had kept hold of her leg by the tongs, drew her out, and began to beat her on the anvil, as you beat red-hot iron.

'"Help me," said He; so all beat, St Peter especially heavily, blow after blow. Marvellously changed became the hag. First her humph disappeared, then her black teeth, and little by little she became quite a jolly dame, pleasant to look on.

'"Now, blacksmith," said our Lord, "you say you are a master-hand, can you do as much as I?"

'At which the smith hung his head and said never a word, and our Lord and the Saints walked on, Peter quite proud and happy with his wife.

'Not so the blacksmith. Sore at the Lord's last words, no sooner had the party left than he said to himself,—"I can do better than that man," so he took his old mother and put her on the fire; but, alas! beat her as he would, she would not grow young, and only fell into pieces in the flames. Then after the three travellers he ran, crying out, "Master! Master! in the name of God, stop! My mother—my poor old mother! I wanted to do like you and make her young, and she is dead—the best mother that ever lived!"

'"Did you love your mother?' asked our Lord.

'"Yes, indeed, dearly."

'"Then go back to your forge, and you shall find her as she was; but another time, learn humility."'

'And did St Peter marry?' asked the Andalouz, with melting eyes.

'I cannot tell you,' replied the dark man, glancing in return, 'but I think so, for I met somewhere a son of Saint Peter; I think, indeed, he was a count.'

This made us all laugh, and the husband woke up and joined.

From talking, the dark man and the enticing lady got to eating. He had what he called a 'canasto de familia,' out of which he brought cold veal (*ternera*) *salchichon* (sausage) and wine.

The way they drank the white wine, those good people, a small sherry, was a caution; the lady taking delicate but constant sips out of the horn, shaking her little head the while, as if it were medicine and nasty. (Everything was duly offered to me, but though much pressed I declined.)

The wine drunk and sausages discussed, to provoke thirst dates were produced by the lady and accepted by me; this charmed them, and as a reward the dark man offered me a toothpick.

Then I was requested to inform them whither I was going, where I had been, who I knew, and a great deal more; all questions put with the best of breeding, but, nevertheless, betraying furious curiosity all the while.

When I said I was delighted with Spain, they all thanked me, and the dark man, shining all over, related another little anecdote.

A friend of his, he said, an Englishman (he must have been a sort of travelling Dundreary), took a ticket at Madrid for a tour in Spain, depositing his heavy luggage at the station. In the course of time he arrived at Cordova, which he liked so much, he remained for three years. Returning to Madrid at the end of this time, he presented his *talon* (ticket) at the station to claim his goods. Great amazement on the part of the officials, specially the *Jefe* (station-master), who cried,—

'You present to me a *talon* which is three years old!'

'Yes,' answered Dundreary, 'that is true, but I am come for my boxes all the same.'

'What! after three years? You cannot expect to find them,' turning up his eyes. 'Impossible! Why, in three years there have been fifteen different *Jefes*. How can I answer for my predecessors?'

'If you do not, I shall apply to my ambassador,' replied the Englishman, roused out of his phlegm. Then, eyeing the *Jefe*, who evidently avoided his gaze,—'You have

a remarkably well-made pair of trousers on, Señor Jefe,' he said. 'Pray, who is your tailor? I seem to know the cut.' The *Jefe* reddened. 'Surely no Spanish tailor can make so exactly like Wolverhauser.'

So, to make a long story short, Dundreary found that the *Jefe* had appropriated the contents of his boxes. He had to confess it at last. 'Needless to say,' continued the dark man, 'that my friend, the Englishman, got no compensation.'

CHAPTER XXVI.

CORDOVA.

Aspect of the Place—Its History—The Mezquita—One of the Wonders of the World—The Makserab—The Zeca—Not like a Church—Patio of Purification—Beside the River—Former Splendours of the Place—Twilight—The Casino—The Ayuntamiento—The Alcazar—Its Gardens—Historic Memories—Count Julian and his Fate—Ferdinand and Isabella and Spanish Chivalry—Earl Rivers—Count Cabra—Pleasant Society—Picnics—Don Quixote's Country.

ARRIVED at Cordova, I find myself gallantly handed into an omnibus by cheery Mr Poole, nephew of the English Consul, and am instantly engulfed by gardens and palm-groves. From them I pass into narrow streets—the houses so low you may almost touch the flower-pots on the roofs—grave, silent streets—alleys rather—Oriental in their blank whiteness. Not a creature about, a city of the dead, save for the deafening noise of our wheels upon the stones over which we pass at a foot's pace, no other being possible.

Then into a spacious plaza, 'Del Gran Capitan,' shut in at one end by the verdant slopes of the Sierra Morena, dotted with *quintas*, convents, towers, and villas; fresh and delicious airs sweeping down among the orange-trees, and handsome *cafés* and houses ranged round.

'Of course,' says cheery Mr Poole, 'we are proud of our Sierra and the great Captain Gonsalvo de Cordova and his equally famous brother, Don Alonzo Aguilar, who died fighting the Moors. We are proud too of our palms. The first palm-tree in Spain was planted here by the Sultan Abdurrah-

man, just as at Seville Cæsar introduced the first plane-trees and planted them at Italica.'

With these great names on our lips, we drove up to the hotel.

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What a contrast to busy, laughing Seville! Kartatuba, 'the important' gem of the Carthaginians, ancient when the Gentile sovereigns reigned in the time of Moses. Then came Greeks, Romans, and Goths, followed by the Kalifs of the rival houses of Marwan and Ummaija, a city of long walls, aloe hedges, crumbling turrets, deserted churches, and empty convents, bordering the lonely banks of the Guadalquivir; and to think that but 800 years ago Cordova was the rival of Mecca in holiness and power, the seat of the Maksurah, the sanctuary of the Zeca; a dream of dim fantastic Oriental life; odalisques and eunuchs gliding beneath Arab arcades; Eastern luxury in banquets under painted roofs; of golden seraglios with showers of rose-leaves; the soft breathings of *guzlas* and cithers; dark heads crowned with Orient pearls, and tissue-robed Sultans served by Ethiop slaves.

If Seville was the Sybaris of the Saracen, Cordova was the Athens. Both great capitals, but always in opposition. Cordova, siding with Pompey in the Roman occupation, was almost exterminated by Cæsar: rebuilt by Marcellus, and repeopled by penniless Roman patricians, it adopted, under the name of 'Patricia,' a grave and dignified aspect, while Seville was corrupting the cohorts by its Improbæ dances and bullfights on the plains.

The Goths cared little for manners or learning; but the Arabs, coming in after the defeat of Roderick, founded a Khalifat subject to Damascus, and respected both.

Too powerful to be subject to anyone, in A.D. 756 Cordova shook itself free, under the great Abdurrahman, who began the Mesquita, to be finished by his son. Like old Dionijsius with his walls at Syracuse, Abdurrahman worked himself an hour each day, Christian slaves laying in the foundations.

Abdurrahman, a patron of art and artists, also founded libraries and schools which drew the erudite of the Moslem from all parts of the globe. In time, these schools, which

boasted of Cordovan Averroes, the learned commentator of Aristotle, became the resort of Christian students, also anxious to instruct themselves in the science of the Eastern world.

From the East first came '*la gaya ciencia*,' discussions of love and arms, the art of minstrelsy, and poetry devoted to the brave. Even Christian knights came to perfect themselves in warlike ways and martial exercises, and to master the graceful evolutions of the tilt of reeds in the elegant tourneys of the Moors.

After Abdurrahman, ten native Sultans ruled in the four kingdoms of Cordova, Seville, Jaen, and Granada, the last falling before St Ferdinand, 1235, when a Moorish vassal founded a new Moresque dynasty at Granada, paying a yearly tribute of handsome Moors carrying torches to be present on his name day in the Capilla Real at Seville.

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When world wonders were reckoned, surely the Mezquita should have been added!

It is so marvellous, adjectives are altogether superfluous. In sheer despair, one says nothing. For such splendour I was not prepared, nor for such vast size. Photos had familiarised me with the eccentricity of double rows of horse-shoe arches hung in air like ribbons, but I did not realise that I was to wander in the mazes of an architectural wood, pillared with marble boles thick and measureless as in a virgin forest.

No windows visible, and the light dim, not solemn nor religious, but weird and grim—the light as of an enchanted cave peopled with demons; not aisles, but avenues of pillars, and those aerial arches, striped red and white, hanging to each other one knows not how. No central space at all, but interminable vistas which the eye follows for a while assiduously, then, puzzled and weary, turns to find itself involved in the intricacies of another and another until the brain reels!

Nineteen avenues traversed by thirty-two others, the whole upheld by nineteen hundred monolithic pillars, nowhere uniform. Jasper here, porphyry there, verde antique, pavonazzo. Neither shafts nor diameters equal. Some too long and sunk into the floor; others too short, and the deficiency

supplied by a higher capital—almost all appropriated from Punic and Roman monuments, fetched by Abdurrahman, and from a temple to Janus which stood upon the spot.

Deep among the central arches is buried the Makserah—the seat of the Kalif—a marvel of embroidered stone. Here the Koran was read in the mystic light of scented tapers and torches, and those ecstatic visions evoked of a sensual paradise, where the faithful lay entranced in the arms of dark-haired houris.

Opposite, across what I must call, in fault of a better word, an avenue rather than an aisle (all church terms are at fault here), is the Zeca or Holiest of Holies, the Kiblah, or point, turning towards Mecca, sheeted by a kaleidoscope of Byzantine mosaic on a gold ground, resembling those at Ravenna in richness, only instead of historic portraits, here are arabesques, sprays, Kufic verses, knots, circles, and borders, of a delicate grace neither pen nor pencil can describe.

(If they had dared to treat art as art, and to represent the human form, what might not these Arabs have accomplished?)

A most lovely shrine, a great marble conch shell for the roof, and round and round upon the pavement the deep footprints of centuries of pilgrims bound to encircle it seven times, as at Mecca.

Such is the Mezquita—now but the desecrated shelter of an old faith, a sanctuary rifled, a mystery revealed. But how glorious in the days of the native Sultans, when the blaze of a thousand coloured lanterns, fed with perfumed oil, played like gems upon the glittering surface. Vases and gemmed censers filled with musk and attar made the air heavy with fragrance; golden candelabra illuminated the Kharassanic carving of the Zeca, the crescent banners of Islam floating beside the Alminbar, or pulpit; the green-turbaned Almuedans mounting to intone the Selan, as the Kalif, emerging from a subterranean passage leading from the Alcazar, treading on Persian carpets, and glittering with jewels, takes his place upon a golden throne within the Maksarah. Or when the voice of the Marabout invites to mid-day prayer, the faithful rise as one man, and bowing to the earth, turn themselves with hollow murmurs towards Mecca.

Swarthy Africans, bare-armed, veiled in white bournous; gay turbaned Berbers; helmeted knights bristling with daggers and scimitars; Numidians with fringed bands, and armlets on elbow and ankle; superb Pashas of many tails; wandering Kalanders who live by magic; the Dervish of the Desert, a sun-dried skeleton; and hoary Imauns in full gathering robes. Then, as the talismanic words mount to the arched vaults, 'There is no God but Allah, and Mahomet is His Prophet, the awed multitude bend reverently, and striking the pavement with their foreheads, echo, '*God is great,*' to which answers the sonorous chant '*Amen!*'

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A guide came to show me a *church* in the Mezquita.

I had clean forgotten that St Ferdinand dedicated it to the Virgin (there is nothing here to recall a church, and as to size, a pyramid might be hidden among the mysteries of these interminable pillars, and no one the wiser), and that Charles V., who had never visited Cordova, permitted a choir to be formed in the centre of the Mosque. When he did come, and beheld the irreparable havoc the work had wrought among the fair embroideries and lacework, he frowned portentously upon the Chapter, and said,—'You have built here what *anyone* could erect *anywhere*, but in the doing it you have destroyed that which never can be replaced.' Upon which, turning on his heel, he walked forth disgusted. Exactly as I did, disgusted also.

Outside is the beautiful Patio of Purification, embowered with tall avenues of ancient orange-trees, stretching forth huge branches rich with fruit and flower over carved cisterns and fountains, and long paved walks, all ranged in squares; much more beautiful than the Patio de los Naranjos at Seville, only *that* was my first love, and the impression never to be effaced.

A Giralda which has been pulled down and built up again too low, and a high turreted wall, towered at intervals and embattled as a medieval stronghold, surrounds the Mezquita.

In the patio I found Geronimo smoking as usual, and at sight of me flinging away his cigarette. I am fain to say I felt ashamed. In honour of our little tour he had arrayed himself in a new suit of sickly coloured rhubarb—a colour most unbecoming to his sallow complexion. Who can have

beguiled him into such a purchase? Camino, the shopkeeper? What a shame!

When flies settle on it they make black spots, and the unusual colour haunts me like a spectre. In this suit he is more stupid than ever, understands nothing, and waves his hand in a conciliatory manner when I remonstrate, repeating, *Bueno, bueno—mucho bueno.*'

Why, too, did he catch a cold which makes him hideous to look on? Why is his beard gristled, his face like a parrot's, and hands like claws?

I ask myself these questions vaguely, sitting on a lonely terrace beside the river, under the shadow of low emerald hills.

Before me the old Roman bridge stretches into seventeen arches, with medieval towers at either end, across the Guadalquivir; the turbid current, increased by the late floods, turning a row of Moorish water-mills, the grinders of the city corn; the gate on the site of the Moorish Babal Kanteran, Doric, by Herrera, and erected by Philip II., a sad anachronism in this mouldering scene. Beside me a Churriqueresque pillar bears the statue of St Raphael, the titular saint of Cordova, and in front rises a fragment of what once was a Moorish carmen or pleasure-house, in a garden edging the stream.

How near seem the verdant slopes of the Sierra Morena! What smooth cool valleys and long lines of hills! Time was when this lonely quarter, massed with Alcazars, Cuartos, Zacatins, fountains and Alamedas, was, as one may say, the court end of Cordova. Three miles to the north, sheltered under hills, lay the pleasaunce of Medina A'Zehra, created by the first Abdurrahman; not one only, but a whole bouquet of royal kiosks and pavilions, entered by gates of blue and yellow tiles, rising out of exotic trees massed in dark shadows; a nursery of choice plants and rare fruit trees, where the Safary peach was first planted in Europe; the marble of the walls, canals and fish-ponds, rose-coloured and green, from Almeria and Carthage; a fountain from Syria, and twelve statues in pure gold, set with precious stones, spouting forth perfumed waters in a hall or patio resting on crystal pillars, a pearl divan in the centre, presented by the Emperor Leo.

Now a solitary shepherd pipes to his flock, traversing the bridge, a jacket of sheepskin on one shoulder, a weather-beaten sombrero on his head; a file of mules laden with bricks follow, threading their way leisurely towards the gate. A ragged goatherd watches his herds grazing beside the stream, and droves of swine burrow in the mould. Anon the deep note of the Mezquita bell swells out with the Ave Maria, responded to by every belfry in the city, and re-echoes from distant churches on the hills.

It is clear Republican irreverence has not penetrated to sober-going Cordova. The beggars at the gate cross themselves; the little ragged urchins racing round the walls pause in their noisy game; the goatherd gathers his flock together for the night: and the swine, as if understanding the signal, scamper off of their own accord.

As twilight falls, the notes of a guitar mix with the evening breeze, castanets mingle in, a hoarse voice chants a Moorish ballad in a sad minor key, and a 'Zampoña' (a reed fixed in a pot covered with vellum) completes the concert.

I went with cheery Mr Poole (he is father of ten children, and says he does not care) to see the Casino, the glory of modern Cordova. For be it known to all and sundry that when the Prince of Wales came here on his way back from India and accepted a dinner, he gave it as his opinion (of course repeated ever since) 'that there was nothing to compare with it in London.'

Naturally the Casino is an old convent, with two vast cloistered patios; the ball-room where the Prince dined, the refectory (a little mixed as to furniture, the carpets smelling somewhat mouldy). Also billiard and reading-rooms, and an excellent restaurant.

The second patio, a gay garden-illuminated space, is altogether given up to gambling. Private rooms, public rooms, saloons for roulette, parlours for vingt-et-un and baccarat, with a sunny boudoir at one end, and a fountain convenient for those inclined quietly to commit suicide. Poole says the gambling here is prodigious.

They were hard at it when we went in at four o'clock, and looked much aggrieved at our intrusion. The doctor especially, being caught in the act, so to say, away from his

patients. The Prefect has forbidden gambling again and again, but no one pays the least heed to him.

'People here have nothing in the world to do,' says Poole, 'and so they gamble—great sums are lost and won. There are 500 members, and the rule is, everything made in the building is to be laid out upon it.'

Hence the wealth and the luxury—the very muslin curtains, as Poole says, purchased by sighs!

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The Ayuntamiento, reached through a maze of unsavoury alleys, is a noble old pile (belonging to the Duke of Almodovar) with a staircase of green marble, the like of which, for magnificence, I never saw.

Midway up against the wall rises a sculptured trophy, high as a house front, the Almodovar coat-of-arms, the half figure of a Moor impaled upon it, representing Boabdil el Chico, last King of Granada, in regal turban and ermine collar, the broad negro mouth, thick lips, and heavy eyes marking it as a portrait; a strong iron chain passing round his neck, attaching him to a tower of 'Pretence' (as heralds say) with the expression of being throttled. I am told by Mr Poole that 'a Moorish king enchained' was a cognisance granted to many of the Christian knights who signalised themselves at the siege of Granada.

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Except a couple of towers frowning over the river and a portion of the walls, nothing remains of the Gothic fortress of the Alcazar.

You enter by an ancient garden where thickets of roses, lilies of the valley, sceptres of hyacinths, and lilacs flinging mauve branches, embalm the air. Tall lime and orange-trees shroud mouldering walls, and melancholy canebrakes whisper to the wind.

An old crone hobbles out of a hovel, no higher than herself, and gives me a lovely nosegay, picking it as we wander through mossy paths, under dripping lemon branches; then, with a *Vaya usted con Dios*, leaves me seated in a bower, where the trailing whiteness of Banksia roses makes a snowy roof. Around nothing but memories! From hence rode forth ardent young Roderick, to fight, reign, or die (his father was Governor of Cordova); and here by a

righteous retribution the fate of his cruel persecutor, Count Julian, was decided.

The Alcazar was the prison of the wicked Witiza, who put out the eyes of Roderick's father, and received the same punishment from his son—his rallying place from Toledo, with his beautiful African Queen Axilona, before the battle of the Guadalette. Every town, hamlet, mountain, and valley sending forth its quota of fighting Goths in burnished armour and brocaded surcoats, heavy with clasps of gold, to fight the stern Saracens.

'If the Moors prevail,' cried Don Roderick, addressing his army in the Campo de la Verdad outside the city, 'our nation ends!'

A gallant stand was made after the Guadalete by Gothic Pelistes; but the Moslems under Magued and Count Julian, after a three months' siege, entered this fortress, then the citadel. (The convent where the Christians lay is called to this day 'St George of the Captives.')

Ere he expired, Pelistes turned his dying eyes upon his former friend, Count Julian.

'Coward!' said he; 'once a true Christian knight, I know thee for what thou art—a hoary traitor.'

These were his last words.

The African Emir Alabar, commanding within these walls, liked not the Count, though his treachery to King Roderick had placed Cordova in his hands.

'A traitor once is always a traitor,' said the shrewd Mussulman. 'Can we trust Julian?'

And an astrologer whom he consulted bade him 'Beware.'

'Enough,' cried the Emir, I will root out him and his brood!'

So Julian was summoned to the Alcazar. But, suspecting evil, he did not come.

Then Alavar in great wrath attacked his castle, defended by his wife Frandina, and took it, demanding their only son as a hostage.

'My son,' answered the intrepid woman, 'is with the dead.'

This reply seemed unanswerable; but Alavar again consulted the astrologer.

'The lad is indeed with the dead,' was his answer, 'but he is alive concealed in the tomb of his sister Florinda.'

Then search was made, and sure enough Count Julian's son was found sleeping on his sister's tomb.

Again calling to him the astrologer, the Emir took the boy by the hand and gave him into his charge. Together they mounted the high tower, the boy clinging to the astrologer for fear.

'There is no danger, child,' quoth the treacherous man, 'look out;' and as the boy turned his head at the warning, the astrologer flung him over the battlements upon the rocks below.

'Is the lad safe?' asked Alavar when he returned alone.

'He is safe,' was the answer. 'Come and see.'

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Finally Alavar captured Count Julian and beheaded him; but the curse of a traitor pursued him beyond the grave.

His sepulchre was so haunted by devils, and such hideous noises were heard, that at last it was opened, and his bones flung into the plain.

From Julian and Roderick my thoughts turn to the splendid days of Spanish chivalry, when Ferdinand and Isabella made the Alcazar ring with preparations for a crusade against the infidels of Granada.

Troop after troop of valiant knights come riding in from every quarter, with glistening targets and waving plumes, mounted on high-stepping chargers as gaily caparisoned as themselves, to the blare of trumpets, beating of drums, and carillons of bells; the knights of Calatrava and of Santiago, Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, the two brothers Aguilar, Gonsalvo and Alonzo, Pulgar, the Count of Cabra, Tendilla and Medina Sidonia. Among them a mysterious stranger coated in a complete suit of black mail and escorted by a resplendent company of horse, the horses shod and bridled with pure gold.

'You bring troops, Sir Stranger, fit for a tournament, rather than for a battle,' says King Ferdinand, addressing the unknown knight from among a group of statesmen, prelates, and steel-clad warriors gathered round the royal standard, eyeing him with a frown.

'Sire,' was the knight's answer, bowing to the saddle-bow. 'Not so;' then raising his vizor and displaying the well-known features of the Duque de Infantado, he added, 'If my

men parade in gold, your highness will find they fight in steel.'

Then it is Earl Rivers' turn to astonish the company (he is the cousin of Margaret Tudor, Queen of Henry VII.), riding in amid marshals, heralds and esquires on an Isabel-coloured horse, and fresh from the bloody field of Boswell, ready to offer his service to the Catholic sovereigns against the Moors, together with a goodly company of British archers and crossbowmen; high feeders all, and deep carousers, 'and of such inordinate pride,' says the chronicle, 'that though coming from a remote and ignorant island, they esteem themselves wiser than we.'

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Ten years pass, and another splendid multitude fills the Alcazar to welcome Count Cabra, who, with his own hand, has captured Boabdil, King of Granada, on the field of Lucena, for which doughty deed Ferdinand and Isabel prepare to do him honour.

While the birds are chirruping in the Judas trees, and the dew is falling on the walks, I look round the garden and wonder in what part all this happened. Where rose the galleries hung with Eastern tissue and cloth of gold? The canopies of crimson, fluttering with banners and pennons, for the King and Queen? Pages the while, as bright as butterflies, fluttering about, and embroidered major-domos, and gaudy marshals, bringing in Ferdinand in royal mantle, and Isabel wearing the close-knit Castilian crown? From whence came the Infanta Isabel in ruff and farthingale, 'a very fair circlet of pearls upon her head,' to take her place upon the Estrado behind the Queen? And the twenty lustrous-eyed maids-of-honour flashing in magnificent attire, to whom twenty cavaliers, very *gaillard* and handsome, in doublet and hose, with plumed velvet caps, set with priceless gems, advance—each choosing his fair partner for the dance—to the music of lutes, cithers and violins?

Alas! there is no one to tell me! The spiked-leaved palms rustle in the soft breeze like souls in pain; the canes and the reeds bow over the fountains like nymphs who mourn; the frogs croak in the carved cisterns, lamenting for other days, and a Moorish cascade rushes down a flight

of marble steps into a marble basin, making a plaintive music of its own.

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Many have been the changes in this Alcazar, or home of Cæsar, since Pompey and his legions garrisoned it, and Marcellus put 28,000 men to death here.

The Inquisition held its bloody tribunal within its walls, and in our own days it has been used by the French alike as a stable and a prison.

So frail are the walls now, there will soon be nothing left; then the old garden will go also, and no sign to mark the spot remain.

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I have fallen into such a pleasant company here, grouping itself round our hospitable Vice-Consul, Mr Shaw, I feel as if I had known them all my life, and that we were never to part again. We meet at the consul's house, antique and low-roofed, close to the Mezquita, with an ever-open door of hospitable intent, and a *criada* who ought to announce us, never to be seen. Everyone is benevolent: a Scotch clergyman who passes his life in curing all sorts of hideous maladies; an Irishman from Malaga, with quicksilver in his veins; Mr Poole's Spanish wife, the most good-natured of her sex, who, when warranted to speak English, cries out in terror, 'No, I can't,' and rushes off to nurse her tenth baby. (Ten children give him 'on care,' Mr P. says; 'take care of each other; if they plague me I walk out.') An amiable French lady of the *ancien régime*, with grey hair and distinguished manners, and a whole bevy of remarkably comely young people, all in love with each other, and mostly engaged, or desiring to be, giving occasion to a thousand amiable little mystifications, fallings out and fallings in, specially on the part of the poor Irishman, who can get no one to look at him. All this company meeting nightly to play and dance, the young ladies sometimes treating us to a fandango with castanets.

The day passes in picnics, to which we are all conveyed in the consul's carriage—a kind of Noah's ark upon wheels, drawn by dray horses up to white *quintas*, and ancient convents, shrouded among mountain-folds, in the beauteous Sierra Morena.

A happy idyllic sort of life. Each one engrossed with the

other, and convinced that the whole world is bounded by the old walls of Moorish Cordova.

In this manner I saw the lovely Saracenic villa of the Marquis Vega Armijo, hung up like a glittering lamp between earth and sky. The snow-capped Alps of Granada purpling into a golden sunset; old watchtowers and outlooks topping the nearer ranges, Cordova below set dark in turrets, and the bare valley of the Guadalquivir winding off to Seville and the sea. Behind, like a green wall, rises the Sierra, where Don Quixote lived.

Each detail of his life become historical. Here you may follow him from point to point, like a living man, from La Cueva (Cave de Montesino), a black hole sixty feet deep, used as a refuge for hunters and shepherds, near Montiel and Toledo—to Valdepeñas and the Posada de la Melodia, where he cut the necks of the wine-skins for Moors. The Venta de Cargenas, near Almuradiel, where Dorothea and her lover (also to be held as solid realities of flesh and blood) were reconciled. To the scene of his penance in a mountain cleft in the heart of emerald-breasted valleys, musical with streams; La Terre Nueva, where he liberated the galley slaves near the line of rail to Linares; and the defile of the Despeñaperros (*Anglicè, infidel dogs*, the *dogs* meaning the Moors), down to the bare corn-sown plains of La Mancha, where the sad end came.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CORDOVA TO VALENCIA.

Adventure Number One, Missing a Train—Adventure Number Two, a Watch lost and found—Almansa—Jativa—Home of the Borgias—Gandia—Gonzalo de Cordova—The Huerta of Valencia—The Cid's Garden—The Cid and Doñña Ximena.

As near as possible I missed the train! Geronimo kept me in the waiting-room at the station waving his hand and saying, '*Bueno, bueno!*' until, seeing no one about, I rushed out on the platform to find every carriage full and the train just being hooked on to the engine!

With the greatest difficulty I procured a seat, leaving him

on the platform shouldering a small green portmanteau he calls his '*equipage*,' still waving his hand and still saying, '*Bueno, bueno!*' Nor were my adventures over for that day, for getting out at a small station backed by rocks, followed by Geronimo, the train actually started without me! Yes, indeed!

It was a moment as of horrible nightmare. A roadside bothy in the depths of the Sierra Morena, not another roof for tens of miles, and no other train for twenty-four hours! I saw it all in a flash, as a drowning man sees his life before he sinks. On went the train, slowly at first, then gradually quickening, and on I went and Geronimo after it, through boggy wetness, open ditches, and muddy puddles. Faster and faster sped the train, and quicker and quicker we ran, or leaped rather, until when all seemed hopeless, my breath failing, an excellent adorable gentleman from Seville, with whom I was travelling, roared and swore and bellowed to that extent out of the window, that he roused the apathetic guard, and a signal was made to me wallowing in the mud, and to Geronimo in his rhubarb-coloured suit, and we got in.

How I sprung up the carriage steps, and how I shook both the hands of that humane Sevillian gentleman, need not be told.

'Never, no never,' cried I, sinking on the cushions, all mud and breathless, 'shall I forget you!'

And now—ingratitude of human nature!—I have lost his card and cannot remember his honourable name, only I know he is a great iron merchant close to the Triana bridge—the fattest, roundest-eyed young man I ever saw; in fact, it seemed to me his eyes kept in their sockets with difficulty, so much so and loosely did they roll.

There are few Jews in Spain, or I should have put him down to that persuasion from his oiliness and fat; but all the same adorable.

A bachelor, as I ascertained. No married man would have been so compassionate. May his bars of iron prosper and his eyes ever roll! (He was bound to Cartagena on business.) My blessing attend him.

This was adventure number one.

At Alcazar, getting out to have some coffee (in which object I failed, for I could not approach the platform by reason of the many trains drawn up), and the whistle sounding, I jumped in again—fast enough this time, I assure you.

I had hardly reseated myself when I found that my watch was gone—my dear faithful little watch, into whose tiny face I have looked day and night so many many years.

'Gone—gone!' I exclaimed, clasping my hands; at which a French family who were travelling with me woke up, and asked,—

'What's gone?'

'My watch!' I cried; 'my dear little watch!'

The lady was very sympathatic (the loss of dress or jewellery always touches a Frenchwoman's heart), and insisted I must telegraph back to Alcazar.

'Yes, telegraph—*il le faut*,' says she out of a white capuchin, which made her look like a ghost.

'Yes, yes,' joins in her son, roused from his sleep.

'Yes, yes,' echoes the friend beside him, muffled like a pard.

'No,' replied I doggedly. 'No, it is useless. I shall never see it again. It is gone—crushed—broken!'

I went to sleep dreaming of my watch. At Almansa we got out to breakfast in a very handsome room. Have you telegraphed?' inquired mamma out of her white capuchin, swallowing down boiling coffee like an Indian juggler.

'No.'

'Do, je vous en prie, madame, pourquoi pas?' the two gentlemen persisting with French pertinacity.

I was hopeless, and didn't want to do anything; but with all their eyes on me, and the hot coffee and the confusion, I yielded, and seeing Geronimo looming in the distance, I desired him to go to the telegraph office and send a despatch to Alcazar.

Before I had well spoken he was back again, a telegram in his hand. On presenting himself at the office he had been questioned, and a telegram given to him saying that a watch had been picked up on the line, and the *Jefe* awaited the owner.

Was ever such luck? And among Spaniards too!

At once I became the centre of attraction, a moral phenomenon, participating in the romance of the lost article. The *Jefe* of Almansa came up, a big burly man in uniform, and the guard of our train, a crushed individual, as under orders and officials. Of course I promised recompense: said I was going on to Valencia, to the Fonda de Paris, smiled, bobbed, and declared I was '*mucha contenta*,' though in my heart I

dreaded seeing the defunct image of my little favourite without a recognisable feature.

Two days after being at Valencia arrived the guard—in his hand my watch *intact*, not a scratch, and *ticking*.

This was too much!

'Why, it is going!' screamed I, kissing it.

'Yes, Señora. It was the *Jefe*. He wound it up to see if it was all right. It goes beautifully.'

Tableaux! Manager of the Fonda, many greasy waiters, a *criada* with hair uncombed for weeks lingering on the stairs, Geronimo staring in his rhubarb-coloured suit, myself clasping my watch in ecstasy.

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Almansa, where the trains for Alicante and Valencia divide, is a wild, barren spot, the ruins of a Moorish castle behind it on a pointed rock.

During the night we had left the plain, and are now steaming along leisurely over a mountain plateau, deeply gorged with red-earthed valleys, rough river courses, and rocky defiles opening to jagged peaks.

Deep down are mills working in the stream (a thread of water over beds of piled-up boulders), a house or two peeps out at far distances among the hills, with open gallery, on which maize sheaves hang out to dry, the *noya* (a water-wheel turned by a patient ox); vine terraces to the sun, and olive patches, and the ploughed land cut out like sampler patterns. Then we descend through purpling gorges, open woods of oak clinging to rocky defiles, and arrive at Jativa, where we stop to dine. (*N.B.*—The food is excellent, as also at Almansa, which displays a gorgeous eating *salle*.)

Jativa is a thriving little town under a deep red shelf of sheltering rocks. A vast mediæval castle terracing overhead, where daylight peeps through long lines of mouldering casements and loopholes—a very ancient place indeed, with a delicious climate. Roman Setabis, and Valeria Augusta in the time of Pliny, who praises it, also Martial, for its manufacture of linen and silk handkerchiefs, much prized at Rome.

Xativa, of the Moors—from whom it was conquered by King Jaime of Arragon. Don Pedro made it a city, and gave it for arms a castle with his *banda* and the four bars of

Catalonia, to supersede the ancient Pagan inscription, 'Sœtabis Herculea condita diva manu.'

As we approach the eastern coast, we draw nearer and nearer to reminiscences of Italy and Rome—specially at Tarragona.

Jativa was the house-tree of the Borgias—Roderick Borja —(the long *j* of the Arabs softened by the Italians into a *g*).

Alexander VI. was born here, and elected archbishop at neighbouring Valencia. Cæsar, his son, succeeded him, and when he threw over the Church and, thanks to the French King, donned a glittering coronet as Duc de Valentinois, another Borgia was found to fill his place.

Gandia, which gave a title to Alexander's eldest son, murdered, it is said, by his brother Cesare, is a seaport a little down the coast—for we are here within sniff of the sea breeze. At Gandia the only decently behaved Borgia lived—Francis, Duke of that name, and actually got himself sainted in the general amazement at his freedom from family crimes.

Anent Jativa Castle, it is said that the great Captain Gonsalvo de Cordova committed here *two* of the three acts of his life he so bitterly repented on his deathbed.

First, imprisoning in the round tower of the old castle his foe, Cesare Borgia, who, however infamous, had sought his hospitality and surrendered on parole. The second, for shutting up here the Duke of Calabria (son of Frederic, King of Naples), who like Cesare, had yielded himself a voluntary prisoner.

(This same Duke of Calabria came in time to marry the gay widow of Ferdinand the Catholic, Germaine de Foix.)

What the third act was of which the great Captain repented is not known. Perhaps it was not having seized the crown of Spain, when Governor of Naples with a victorious army at his back, instead of allowing himself to die of a broken heart through the ingratitude of his master Ferdinand.

Now we are steaming through the Huerta of Valencia, an unexampled garden of olives, pimentos (pepper-trees—and what a noble tree it is when at its prime!) figs, carobs, nespole, almonds, apricots, oleanders, and pomegranates—the delicate sprigs just reddening into life; avenues of palms and eucalyptus, fences of aloes and prickly pear, mimosa and myrtle, vine branches running from tree to tree, and

passiaflora. Add to this miles and miles of orange-woods, extending over the plain like forests in full blossom—the flowers perfuming the air to faintness, the ground strewed with the golden fruit, which herds of swine are eating.

An incredible district, famous in all time—the glory of the Roman colonists; the garden of the Goths; the delight of the Arab, who held that heaven had fallen here to earth and made a Paradise; conquered by the Cid; retaken by the Moor; conquered again by valiant Jaime of Arragon, and finally united to Spain under Ferdinand the Catholic.

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According to the Romancero, it was within this Huerta that the crafty Moor, Abemer, gave to the Cid that *plaisaunce* in the which to solace himself during the long siege of Valencia. This Abemer did cunningly, to win the Cid's favour, but greatly in fear lest his fellow-citizens in Valencia might get wind of it and kill him.

And the Cid was cunning also, and refused to come into the garden until a new gate was made from the camp by which he might pass freely, instead of threading the close-packed alleys of the treacherous Moors.

So to please him Abemer made a new gate, and decked it with Eastern stuffs, strewed the walks with rushes and prepared a feast. But the Cid did not come; nor would he venture until the whole suburb was in his hands, causing by his presence such a hubbub among the Moors, that even then he dared not remain, and was forced to return to his headquarters at Jativa.

This angered him greatly, so he gave orders to break down the bridges and open the sluices of irrigation, that the whole Huerta might be flooded; 'the Lord Jesus,' continues the Romancero, 'ordering such a rain and wind that night that the like of it no man remembered.' Upon which the Moors, always a fatalistic people, convinced that the hand of God was visibly against them, assembled together, and a certain wise man went up into the highest tower, called El Miguelete, and looking round at the devasted country, displayed a flag of truce.

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I am sorry to destroy poetic illusions, but that vaunted hero the Cid Campeador was a sad ruffian. Fabulously

brave, indeed, and loyal when it suited him, and tender to his own—otherwise as barbarously cruel, and as keenly alive to his own interests as the most vulgar Jew. The Cid gained Valencia by fraud, and governed it by blood. Without the title of King, he assumed the authority, broke every pledge he had given to the Moors, and burnt his unfortunate friend Abemer alive in the Plaza.

When all was over he sent for his wife and daughter from Burgos.

Now all the world knows that Donña Ximena is the Chimène of Corneille, the daughter of Don Diego of Burgos, and that for an insult offered to the Cid's father, the Cid killed him, causing Chimène to utter those eloquent rhapsodies of love and rage declaimed with such pathos by the great Rachel, '*C'est peu de dire aimer, je l'adore. Ma passion s'oppose à mon ressentiment. Et dans mon ennemi je trouve mon amant.*' In reality Donña Ximena a good and faithful soul, terrified at her terrible lord, and always obedient as a slave, started from Burgos with her two daughters at his command, and when the Cid knew that she had arrived he girded on his sword (Tizona), and mounting his warhorse, Babieca, rode out to the Huerta to meet her with two hundred knights. As soon as Ximena saw him she fell upon her knees, she and her two daughters, and the Cid raised them up, and shedding tears of joy, told them to 'fear nothing.'

At Valencia he too mounts with them into the famous tower of El Miguelete—an angular Gothic belfry of brown stone, still standing, with a great bell, now the campanile of the Cathedral—and in the clear sky points to the blue and white domed city beneath, thick with points and minarets; the rival tower of Alibufat (given later to the Templars); the Seo, and Alcazar; the massive bridges, and tapia battlements hemmed in by palms; the fruitful country around studded with snowy *alquerias* and *quintas*, like pearls set in emeralds; old Seguntum to the north, and by the shore the army of the King of Tunis lying encamped—a sight which made gentle Ximena tremble and again fall down.

'Fear nothing, honoured wife,' again says the Cid, raising her. 'Look boldly out: all this I give you for a marriage gift. I have won it, and I will soon send the King of Tunis packing from whence he came.'

And so it was. But the conquest of Valencia did no good to the Cid nor to Doñña Ximena. He himself died there in the flower of his age, asking pardon of God for all his sins; his corpse, by Ximena's order, lashed on his horse Babieca, his sword 'Tizona' in his right hand, and carried to Burgos to be interred. She herself driven out by the Moors, and her daughters married to two Infantas of Navarre, false and cruel men, who led them away to a lonely place on the borders of Portugal, where they tore their rich mantles from them, and holding them by the hair, beat and kicked them until they were nearly dead, saying, 'Now we can have our vengeance on you proud minxes for the small dower your father gave us. Lie there, daughters of the Cid Campeador! —we shall see what he can do for you now!'

'Thus,' says the chronicler, 'was the Cid punished.'

But all the same, these ill-used dames, like many a one of low degree, seemed on the whole to like it, for they made up with the Infantas their husbands, and bore them children, who became ancestors of the Kings of France.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VALENCIA.

A *Tartana*—The City—The Port—English Consuls in Spain—Valencian Fans—Valencian Wares—Valencian Palaces—Cathedral—Museum — The Universidad — Colegio de Corpus — Miraculous Picture—The Audiencia—The Silk Exchange—Flower-Market—Costumes in the Plaza—Ferocity of the People—An Evening at the Opera.

THE first thing you see on entering Valencia is the immense Plaza de Toros, a modern Coliseum, the next the *tartanas*, all black with a tilted cover, like gondolas on wheels. I scrambled into one by a little outside stair, the driver sitting on one side of the shaft on a stool, and so I arrived at the hotel, feeling much as if I were dead and driving in my own hearse.

Next to Barcelona, Valencia is the richest and busiest capital in Spain, well knit up with high palaces in the northern style, sad coloured and grey, with refreshing touches of moss and lichen. The people, a hardy Catalan race, as great a

contrast as their city to the blazing walls and lazy indolence of the Andalusian, and governed in the old time, after the Cid, by hard-visaged kings, thin and despotic; the Pedros and Jaimes succeeding to the Moors.

Not a very fine city after all, and not on the sea, as I expected, but with a certain Gothic dignity, all the same. (You go to the sea, three miles off, in a tram through a quagmire, *quintas* and villas all the way, sheeted with flowers. Not houses arranged for sleeping, as the low lands and rice grounds are unhealthy. Arrived at the Port or Grao, all mud and merchandise, and disgusting with bad smells, you return as rapidly as you came, repenting you ever went.)

Valencia proper lies prettily beside a river, the banks breaking out spontaneously into *bosquets* and gardens; the Glorieta, a good promenade, lighted by the electric light; then over a mediæval bridge to the broad-avenued Alameda, a flowery paradise, where the ghostly *tartanas* of society drive dolefully up and down like continual funerals; and further, on a third garden, the 'Botanical,' shaded with lovely pines.

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Mr and Mrs Dart, the English Vice-Consul and his wife, are the kindest of people. (I cannot tell how consoling it is to arrive at strange places, and to become the object of so much solicitude.) I have just been celebrating the praises of Mr Shaw, of Cordova. At Valencia I am quite touched by the unaffected goodness of the excellent Darts.

I never saw them before, and shall probably never meet them again, but if I had been a blood relation or a shipwrecked orphan they could not have received me more warmly. (And here a word *en parenthèse.*) Beginning with our Consul, Mr Perry at Cadiz, Mr M'Pherson at Madrid, and 'the Wilkinsons' at Malaga, our consular body, as a rule, does honour to our great land. But there are exceptions: one gentleman, holding the office in a great southern city, piques himself upon doing *nothing*, because he is not paid; another, with a Spanish wife, not only does nothing, but positively impedes everybody else, and, on the whole, appears to approve the wholesale system of peculation committed on the rail. Now I want to know what right a man has to place the lion and the unicorn over his door, if he does

not mean to follow its legend? If as Vice-Consul he is not *paid*, why fight and squabble for the office? There is much in this which requires reformation, and it will come some day, when the the voice of the suffering public is loud enough to make itself heard, and Spain becomes a travelled country.)

Most of the far-famed Spanish fans (*abanicos*) come from Valencia, of every sort and kind, painted, carved, spangled, and embroidered. Colomina, the maker, would be a millionaire in Paris or London, but he sticks to the old place, and asks his own price—by no means extravagant. The shops are brilliant with silver work, Albacete knives and daggers with worked Moorish handles, and gloves, lace, *mantos*, and embroideries which have come down from the elegant-mannered Moors. Last, though not least, there are many manufactories of *azulejo* tiles at the near village of Manises, where the earth is of a dark red colour—interesting as being the undoubted germ of the Raphael ware (majolica) carried from Majorca to Italy.

The principal houses bear an air of solid nobility, in the Palladian style of Padua and Vicenza, mixed up with Gothic courts and Arab patios, elliptical arcades, double windows divided by a single slender shaft, platuresque walls, and long lines of arches upon the open roof.

But spite of outside show and a substantial income, your Valencian noble has no sentiment of social duties. He lives like a fossil in a cabinet, with no thought beyond his native city, a glass of water his only hospitality, and the state rooms opened at marriages or funerals his only house-warming.

I see many Gothic churches: the Seo, or Cathedral (not Gothic), with nothing particular inside; one dedicated to San Vincente Ferrer, who was baptised here—his 'bautismo' represented every year by groups of dressed figures called *bultos*, as large as life, in a religious *auto*. A museum in an old convent, with good specimens of the native school, of Ribiera, Ribalta, Juanes and Espinoza, as well as interesting pictures of the modern Valencian painters; a library of 42,000 volumes; a curious chapel, unhappily modernised, of the Virgin de los Desparados (unprotected); the *sagrada imagen*, a mass of emeralds and diamonds, under a canopy

of jaspers ; a Universidad and a Calle de Caballeros, where the aristocracy air themselves on afternoons, and the Plaza San Catalina, a mart of gossip on the return from mass. But the ecclesiastical sight *par excellence* (I have just been with the Darts) is the Colegio de Corpus, darkened into gloom by the express desire of the founder, Archbishop Ribera.

The Queen of Heaven 'receives' here, in her chapel, on a Friday for the *miserere*. Fortunately I just hit on the day. A vast congregation, the ladies in black manto and mantilla, silent as the grave. At the first verse of solemn chantings, her picture over the altar (by Ribalta) descends by a noiseless machinery upon the altar, and a lilac veil shot with silver takes its place.

As the chant proceeds this veil turns to grey, then to deep black (the veil, of the temple as it were, 'rent in twain'), when to the most pathetic harmonies from invisible choirs (it is by this time so dark you cannot see your own hand) the image of the Saviour appears on an illuminated background, nailed to the cross, and a burst of wailing voices pierce the ear.

The carving of this most dramatic of crucifixes, Mr Dart tells me, is one of the finest things in Spain. He tried to persuade me to mount a ladder to examine it, as people do, but I declined. It is said to be miraculous ; *at least a miracle of art.* I have been, too, with the Darts to the Audiencia or Parliament-house of Arragon, an old Doric pile, where the National Cortes were held in olden time ; on the first floor a mediæval chamber with the most marvellous ceiling I ever beheld, one surface of carved gilding three hundred years old, as fresh as if executed yesterday. Overhead, El Salon de Cortes, a noble hall with another vaulted ceiling in dark sculptured oak, still more artistically exquisite, with a charming carved gallery around with balustrades, for the spectators ; on the walls architectural frescoes by Cristoval Zariñena and Peralta, of kings, statesmen, nobles, judges, warriors—the effect wonderfully real.

I longed to know the history of these paintings, badges and portraits, but Mr Dart could not tell me much.

There is the shield of Arragon and Navarre, once plain gold, then streaked with four red bars by the bloody finger

of King Jaime on the field of battle; the arms of Ramiro the monk, who, becoming king on the death of his brother, invited his principal nobles to a feast, and taking them down into a vault, showed them the Archbishop's head suspended by a cord, and the heads of all his other enemies strewn upon the stones—a delicate hint of his intended mode of proceeding, naturally not lost upon his guests; the escutcheon of Pedro el Grande (*not* El Cruel), the husband of Constantia, heiress of Sicily. Alfonso 'the Magnificent,' a most gay and lively cavalier, down to Arragonese Ferdinand, with his matrimonial *giogo* and sheaf of clustered arrows.

Upon the *hautpas* or daïs sat these grim old kings face to face with the *communeros*, met together to frame laws and deal justice to the nation.

After all, there was a certain constitutional liberty in these assemblies before Charles V. suppressed all local authorities, and centralised the whole government at Madrid. Personal despotism came in with Philip II., his bigot son and weak grandson.

Then we visited the Lonja de Seda (Silk Exchange), another superb Gothic hall of the fourteenth century, the fretted roof upheld by a charming anomaly of twisted *rénaissance* pillars, wreathed like those of the Pagan temple Raphael introduces in the back-ground of 'St Paul preaching at Athens.'

I know no city in Europe with nobler models of civic architecture than in these grand old halls, untouched, uninjured; the gaudy fantasies of the Arab toned down to the severer exigencies of Gothic art, yet still asserting itself in an exuberance which marks the period of transition. Just as in a reverse degree the coloured tilings and mural embroideries of the Saracens, their pillared courts and horse-shoe arches, are an exaggerated outcome of the ornate splendour of Egypt and the East.

I found the flower-market outside, on the antique Plaza del Mercado. Here I bought of buxom matrons, by no means slender, yet hid behind hedges of carnations and roses (*N.B.* the month is March), nosegays bigger than my head for a real (twenty-five centimes), nosegay after nosegay, just to feel them mine (I was leaving next day). Such roses! Marshal Niel and Gloire de Dijon, as brilliant as earth and sun could make them; the fine old Plaza around like a

sketch by Prout, where tourneys and *autos* were held, and our heroic friend, the Cid, burnt and beheaded at pleasure.

I passed a wretched child, flung as it were upon a heap of rags, who called out, pointing to me, 'Nuestra Señora'—a poor compliment to the Virgin, as I wore an old travelling dress, and Geronimo in his rhubarb-coloured suit made but a sorry St Joseph.

In the Plaza you may study the hempen sandals of the Catalan, brought by the Moors from Asia; the Media Valenciana, a common epithet for a student's empty purse; the white linen drawers as worn by Augustus at Tarragona, and the striped waist-sash, a European substitute for the Turkish girdle; gaudy jackets with open sleeves, dazzling with silver buttons, and many-coloured head-gear, supplementing the once all-prevailing turban of the Moor—amid the screech of genuine bagpipes from the Pyrenees (the flocks following the wild notes anywhere, even the herds of swine), combined with a guitar and tambourine setting all the girls dancing.

The Valencians, I regret to say, bear the same bad reputation as the people of Malaga. Anyone who desires to polish off an enemy will find a native ready to his hand who, for a few *pesetas*, will raise his long gun and do the business with as little remorse as he would shoot down a rabbit. The roads outside the town are dangerous at night, specially that to the Grao, and a stab in the ribs an event to be looked for. The same to be said of Sicily and Southern Italy, which brings me back to the point from which I started, that Valencia is thoroughly Italian.

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In the evening I went to the Opera, a fine building, filled to overflowing with an audience wonderful as to clothes—the ladies' hair literally in curtains on the brow and *parterred* with roses; monstrously fat, too, and of African type; the men heavy and ponderous, except a thin, lank-cheeked Catalan here and there.

It was an Italian company. The worst Faust I ever beheld—tall, old and awkward, with a cracked voice and an over lively Marguerite, who skipped and ambled like a deer. The audience, at a loss, seemed to think it right to applaud, which encouragement only made her jump the more.

Sitting in the stalls, I felt profoundly ashamed of my companion. Geronimo, in his rhubarb clothes, clasping two umbrellas, and tried to look as if he did not belong to me; but with his lack-lustre eyes turned faithfully on me like an attached dog, this was impossible. Then I rescued the umbrellas from his grasp, and told him to look on the stage instead of me. Yet Geronimo had the wit to understand that Faust sang false and was '*muy malo*,' as he informed me afterwards on our way back to the hotel—all cats and bad odours, with *tartana* omnibuses rumbling about at every hour of the night, as for nocturnal burials.

CHAPTER XXIX.

VALENCIA, BY ALICANTE, TO MURCIA.

Soldiers at the Station—The *Jefe*—A Talkative Traveller—La Encina—A Delay—Yellow Alicante—A Lovely Night—By *Correo* to Murcia—Mineral Wealth of the Province—The Stupidest People in Spain—Elche and its Palms—A Disagreeable Town—The *Posada*—The Coach at Last—A Furious Driver—Heights of Orihuela—The Last Stand of the Goths—Town of Orihuela—Arrival at Murcia—A Vile Inn and a Handsome Town—View from the Cathedral El Zagal.

Of course I was at the station an hour before the time. ('*Che vuole?*' I cannot help it.)

It was crowded with soldiers *en route* to Madrid; rough honest lads, simple as children, and perfectly ugly and polite. Not a harsh word. Not an oath. If any voices rang out it was with laughter. If I say ugly, read hideous, and so all through Spain. As a rule the male animal is as unprepossessing as his mate is attractive.

The kind Darts were there to say good-bye (wherever I find myself, pleasant life-fragments drop in and drop out like a dissolving view). Then I made the acquaintance of the *Jefe* (*chef de gare*), a burly masterful man, with whom I was to travel, bound on a tour of inspection.

The *Jefe* introduced me to his French wife and two infants scientifically whirling fans; and here I take note that his 'inspection,' like most official things in Spain, was a failure.

He slept all the way, and snored! The law is excellent, but no one observes it!

Beside this person and Geromino, in the carriage with me was a shrunk-up man with a hatchet-face; a fourth traveller also, stout and comfortable. (He arrived in a casquet hat, went into a cloth cap, and finally emerged in a *sombrero*.)

We were all most lively. Close upon midnight the hatchet-face produced an ivory relic valued at £120, which he was taking to Madrid, and the stout man talked like a mill in Italian, Spanish and French, quite indifferent whether anyone answered him or not.

As the night wore on he talked the more. All being asleep—the dealer after displaying his relic collapsed, the inspector doing his duty in his dreams, and myself dozing—he attacked poor Geronimo, as a limp specimen of humanity easy to manipulate. Much too polite to offer any resistance, he answered in dreary tones. To ask a man not to talk would be an act of unheard-of rudeness. So the stout man talked himself into the small hours, unhappy Geronimo at last lighting a cigarette to mitigate his woe. (He confided to me afterwards that he thought 'that man was possessed with a devil.')

At 3 a.m. we reached La Encina, a junction where we changed trains and waited three hours.

(These little accidents will occur on Iberian railways, and are held as inevitable by a people still imbued with the Ancient notion of unalterable Fate.)

All classes—soldiers, labourers buried in striped blankets and long pockets hanging over one shoulder, ladies, caballeros, artizans, sailors, and boys—all huddled into a miserable hole lighted by a stinking petroleum lamp, and dense with tobacco smoke.

Our talking friend at once found me out, and seating himself beside me, pitied me in Italian. I suppose I looked bored, at which he burst into English, in the midst of indescribable general sleepiness on wooden benches without backs; but the man was so good-natured and so unconscious of offending, running about to find when the Alicante train started, and returning to run off again every time a bell rung (and that was often), I was fain to forgive him.

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An indescribable confusion! One train to Madrid, another back to Valencia, and a third to Alicante. Perfect civility, and entire indifference. How boxes are not lost, and passengers also, I cannot conceive.

Our talking friend set my anxiety at rest. Again he had fallen on Geronimo, at that moment refreshing himself on the floor out of a tin case over which he crouched.

On our way to Alicante the truth came out. The talking man was the chief of the Telegraph Office, to which establishment he cordially invited me.

I went, as I was bound. Naturally, he talked all languages. The electricity of the machine had passed into the man. I suppose he got it from the wires! He was charged to the brim!

I find Alicante a hideous, sun-scorched place, all yellow. Yellow houses, yellow earth, a yellow castle on a yellow rock. Not a tree or shrub, and quite modern. Broad, unfinished streets, with that Spanish towsled look of nothing matching; a large empty theatre, and a circus building with planks which kept me awake all night; the port full of steamers exporting principally esparto grass—a fibrous substance which bathed in water, is a cheap substitute for rags for paper (to England alone 100,000 tons go annually; also large quantities to France and America); dried raisins we call Malaga almonds, wine, and liquorice. A soft, heavenly climate, and a most splendid palm avenue down by the sea. That is all. The Hotel Bosio is clean but rough, and not an available house or lodging to be obtained for love or money. Disgusted with the noise, I returned to the sheltering palms, where I sat until the moon rose in tropical refulgence, and lit up the earth in a dream of silvery brightness. For hours and hours I paced among those half-human trees, which live and propagate, male and female, like man, refusing any company but of their own kind, and barren if alone.

Higher and higher the moon mounted into realms of blue, and star after star shone out, to be doubled on the waves. The wash of the tide beat against the pier, the night wind called forth the perfume of banks of flowers, and the soft sea-breeze moaned among the rocks. It was peace, absolute peace, such as comes to one balancing on the bosom of the broad ocean, on desert plains far from the track of man,

amid the mysteries of deep forests, or in the grave. Nor was there silence. To my ear many voices spoke. 'The river to the lake, the mottled sky telling stories to the sea, and starry sparks making music in the dark. The sound of streams was there I heard not in the day, and every wave seemed seeking for a star.'

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At Alicante the rail ends, and you start for Murcia in an omnibus misnamed 'the *correo*' (courier).

Around, rise the hillocks of a sandy plain, heaving itself as with a land swell towards the sea. I pass great salt marshes shifting themselves uneasily to the coast, a blue line just visible—the soda-plant, low, bluish-green, turning into brown, like the thistle, and spiked esparto grass the only verdure.

Thus pass miles and miles of indescribable dreariness; the road not bad, maintained by the Government (bad roads are only in localities where the rascally Alcaldes put the money into their pockets), but lonely and depressing.

Without knowing it, I have entered the tiny kingdom of Murcia, lying between Valencia, Granada, and La Mancha, *despoblados*, as the Spaniards say, and dry as a pot-sherd; a thirsty soil, requiring all the ingenuity of the Moor in irrigation: then blooming a very Eden, as the far-off Huertas show.

In the Arab occupation, Mursiah in Tarshish (the whole south of Spain was known as Tarshish) bore never-failing harvests. Thus it was under the Carthaginians, who conquered it not only for its fertility but for its mineral wealth, to recoup themselves for the loss of Sicily, and thus it continued with their successors—the Romans. The warriors of the great family of Barca founded Cartagena on this coast (Carthago Nova) with its fine natural harbour, as an *entrepôt* for the ore and precious metals found among these hills. Again and again the old shafts of the Carthaginians have been reopened and re-worked, and their mining experience proved by the value of the bore—'the stupidest people in all Spain, the Murcians,' say the mockers!

Even in the time of the Romans, Murcia was called the Spanish Bœotia, and the natives jeered at. 'Heaven and earth good,' said the proverb, 'but all between *malo!*'

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Approaching Elche in this calcined landscape, I am conscious of entering a European Africa; each miserable hovel built of mud, with no visible roof, a lean-to of dried arundo leaves, and overshadowed by palms. Not another tree visible on the horizon. Thicker and thicker they come (the palms), also the mud hovels, culminating in one universal palm-wood darkening the road.

Of all frightful things in nature, commend me to the Elche palms. When young and well tended, as at Alicante, with noble fronds waving to the winds, and yellow fruit dropping from golden hearts, palms are the king of trees; but at Elche they fall into a dishonoured old age, shrink up, limp and feeble, and lean to one side, in the last stage of tree decrepitude. Not a plant grows beneath, not a weed; scant corn patches here and there in openings, and men like monkeys clinging to the coruscated trunks, attached by a cord, to knock off dried leaves and clean out rusty crevices, just as a barber trims and furbishes an ancient wig; palms of merchandise these, and cut and packed for traffic, for Elche supplies the Spanish churches for Easter, as Bordighera does those of Italy.

Elche itself is a cluster of plaster dwellings, shapeless and void. Not a glass window in the place. Each house on its own dirty hook, with no reference to its neighbour; a break-neck pavement; the entire population a degraded crowd squatting in the sun; foul parti-coloured children with supernaturally large eyes rolling in the gutter; dogs growling or fawning, according to taste and disposition; pigs and fowls wallowing; heaps of esparto cord lying about, men passing it through their hands to soften it; oranges in piles, and [illegible] unripe dates; tables set with wine and drinks, muddy and unpalatable. Many blind beggars wandering about, also cripples, and a dwarf without legs, screaming for pennies (she, for it is a female, impels herself forward on a chair under our horses' feet—indeed, but for the intelligence of the little leader, she must have been crushed). The *posada*, a horrible place, with an earthen floor; a great houseplace on entering, like a barn, where Don Quixote might have ridden in on Rosinante, with Sancho on Dapple—leading to the stable, packed at the side with muddy *tartanas* and dilapidated omnibuses; a wooden gallery overhead running

round, and in corners seats of matting. On one side a kitchen redolent of garlic; on the other, a dingy parlour. The entrance a frame for ragged children, who, when too numerous and penetrating indoors, are repulsed by the master flinging out jugs of water.

People come and go vaguely, all smoking; an exhausted woman drops in laden with bundles, lies down upon the stairs, and calls faintly for a glass of *aquaforte*. Her face is deathlike, but no one gives any heed, nor would they, had she died. Meddling is no man's business, also rude; yet the chairs were filled by men solemnly smoking, the housewife goes and comes on her domestic errands, and a bold-faced child kicks its heels and stares complacently.

At mid-day two tables were set for dinner, one with a cloth for the masters, called the *table d'hôte*, another one without a cloth for the servants. Beans, soup and bread are the viands, washed down by copious draughts of excellent wine, the bold-faced child partaking out of a saucer, dogs in attendance, a cat without a tail, and a whole drove of chickens.

Here for two mortal hours I sat awaiting the coach to take me to Murcia. I advise no one to linger at Elche. Driving through you see the palms. There is nothing to investigate, except you are an archæologist and inclined to inspect the church.

I may say, *en passant*, there is some talk of making Elche, with its lovely climate and nearness to the sea, a winter sanatorium; all very fine and feasible if the present town be burnt down and a decent one built in its place. Perhaps, too, an import of a few hundred niggers from Africa would not be amiss, and give a better local colour.

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At last came the coach, a diligence, with a *coupé*, in which I seated myself, the driver gay in a velvet jacket worked in silk, breeches, stockings and sandals; his *muchacho* (boy) at his side, his special province being to stand upright and beat and swear at the team of eight horses, two and two, led by a small donkey. His jacket filled with stones to throw at them; in rough places whirling his whip, and lashing and screaming in a most awful way. Dust flew, bells rung, tails whisked, and the diligence rolled from side to side; the *muchacho* inform-

ing the horses that they were dogs,' 'sons of unchaste mothers' (!) Turks—carrion fit only for the *picadores* and the bull-ring.

Maddened by these accumulated reproaches, the sting of which they seemed to understand, the unhappy brutes flew, rather than galloped, until their lean flanks ran with moisture, specially the poor little donkey in front, whose efforts to please were frantic, but ineffectual.

Over the bridge we dashed and into the open country, at such a breakneck pace I expected every instant to be deposited at the bottom of one of the deep ditches which lined the road—a state of things unendurable to such a coward as I am. I never ceased screaming, but could not make myself heard, by reason of the noise. Then, desperate, I leaned out of the front window and pinched the *muchacho* in the back until he turned. Quick as lightning the fellow understood my signs, laughed, and with much good-nature gradually relaxed the exercise of his terrific whip, doubled up the thong, and finally ended by sitting down and smoking peacefully.

Water and fruit were served to us when we changed horses; the horses changed, also the driver, but the *muchacho* fortunately remained. From the force of habit, with every fresh start he burst out again into wild howls and imprecations, whirling his whip, but an admonitory pinch in the back recalled him to reason, and we soon jogged on quietly as before.

As the sun went down amid lemon-coloured clouds, the escarped heights of Orihuela reared themselves before us, crowned by the dark bulwarks of an ancient fortress. At this castle the Goths made their last stand against the militant Bishop Oppas, brother of Count Julian, and Abdalasis, son of the great Muza, destined to such a bitter end with his beautiful Queen Exilona.

'Go, my son,' said Muza, conquering at Merida in the north, to Abdalasis, 'carry thy valiant sword into the south—a rich harvest awaits thee.'

But the kingdom of Murcia was defended by the veteran Teodomir, his Goths entrenched within the impregnable walls of Orihuela.

'Here,' said he, 'a simple goatherd can keep a regiment

at bay, hurling down rocks and stones, and showering missiles from on high.'

But the young Gothic chiefs would not listen to Teodomir, but drew him out into the open country, and Abdalasis and his army threw themselves between them and Orihuela.

Teodomir fought like a lion, but of what avail? His two sons were cut down before his eyes, and his troops fled. Then, turning his horse, he rode back to Orihuela.

At the hour of twilight Abdalasis approached, but paused when he saw the walls so marvellously guarded. (Teodomir had clothed the women in helmets and surcoats, and crossed their long hair on their chins to look like beards.)

Quick to perceive his advantage, bearing a flag of truce, the Goth descended and entered the Moslem camp, where he was favourably received.

'You perceive, O Abdalasis!' said the wary chief, not without a sense of Homeric humour, 'that the castle of Orihuela is capable of a long siege, but I would willingly spare the lives of my veterans. Promise that they shall depart, and I will yield without a blow?'

To this the Moor assented; but when at break of day the gates were thrown open, and Teodomir's 'veterans' appeared in the person of one page, and a crowd of decrepid men and women and children, the wrath of the Mussulmans waxed hot. Bishop Oppas said that the capitulation was false and must be cancelled, but Abdalasis, of a kindlier nature, admired the subtlety of the old warrior and let them go.

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Round and round the base of this castle-rock we turned in our diligence for many a mile, through overhanging lanes and by outlines of oriental villages; palms rising among embowering woods of orange and citron, broken by red-earthed gorges, and *barancos* strewd with many-coloured marbles, until we arrived at the town of Orihuela (Auriwelah of the Moors), very Eastern, with domed church and castellated towers, the whole country fertile beyond words, the subsoil a precious mineral district, wanting but capital to call forth its resources. In the meantime the great tidal rivers yearly overflow their banks, and the outer world knows nothing of Murcia but as a scene of incredible havoc and disaster.

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At the town of Murcia I put up at a horrible inn, Del Comercio, a real old-fashioned *fonda*, our waiter, a *caballero*, above his place, and apathetical and haughty, understanding nothing but Spanish; big gaping stairs, up which a coach and six might drive; large entrances, and endless brick-floored passages.

Put into a sordid room with a truckle bed and bare walls, I remonstrated.

'What is the matter with the room?' asked the black-browed *camarero*, scowling at me. 'You have a bed, a chair, and a table. What can you want more? We have no better.'

When things come to this pass, I hold my tongue, on the principle of the Eastern Caliph imprisoned in a loathsome dungeon, who when the rats dropped from the walls into his frugal plate of rice, laughed and said, 'Now that things are at their worst, they will surely mend!'

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Next morning I woke up to find a prosperous town of 80,000 inhabitants, wide streeted, busy, handsome, a mass of varied colour—a fine cathedral (unhappily modernised in the fifteenth century) in the midst; with a square graduated tower (drawn out, as it were, in compartments like a telescope), from whence I overlooked the fruitful Huerta, hemmed in by an amphitheatre of mountains, cloven by wide rivers; a very wonderful prospect, full of colour and contrast, the purple outline of Monte Agudo towering above all.

The Moors loved this fertile district under the snowy range of the kingdom of Granada, and stoutly defended it. At Murcia that wily old Mussulman El Zagal, own uncle of Boabdil, encountered the invading Ferdinand, and threw out an ambush near the city walls. Towards which the Christians hotly advancing to the sound of drums and fifes, led by Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, suddenly came on the old fox, who opened a terrible fire on flank and rear.

'El Zagal! El Zagal!' shouted the Moslems as they drove the Christians back, and 'El Zagal! El Zagal!' re-echoed from the walls.

Make not too sure, my gallant Moors, nor wily old El Zagal! The Adelantado of Murcia, a gallant gentleman,

is there, and throws himself between the struggling armies. The Moors in their turn are driven back, and retreat into the city, and Ferdinand encamps on the banks of the Segura (a deeply banked river, now so cruelly bled for irrigation that nothing but a thread remains bordering the tropical promenade of the Malecon), setting himself seriously to consider if he had judged wisely in defying the old lion, El Zagal, in his lair.

A little episode this of the siege of Murcia, fitting in well with the palms and the flowers.

CHAPTER XXX.

MURCIA TO GRANADA.

A Storm Brewing—Rain—Mala Tierra—Inundation—A Terrible Crossing—Storm-stayed at Cordova—On the Way to Granada—Montilla—Its Vineyards and Castle—Puente Genil—A Republican Leader—Another *Trasbodo*—Pena de los Enamorados—Another Glimpse at Earl Rivers and Isabella—Loja—Scene of Boabdil's Defeat—Granada at Last.

YOU must have good nerves to travel in the south of Spain. Remember it is much nearer Africa than Europe, and that a tropical country brings tropical storms. I who preach forget all this, travelling up in great comfort from Murcia in company with a pleasant young countryman from Manchester. Little did I think what awaited me, as I calmly admired the splendid mountain ranges through which we passed, the deep shadows on bronzed and purpling cliffs of lofty Sierras, the precipitous ravines, with delicate screens of feathery woodland, and the white peeps of distant crags upon which flickering sunbeams rest.

At the station of Chincilla the sky to the west darkened, and shadowy clouds, murky and menacing, hurried onwards, impelled by invisible currents, and there were low mutterings in the air as heard before a tempest.

At Alcazar I was to change trains for Andalusia, not an easy matter, with no soul to help me, four trains full, drawn up at the station, and every inch of ground sinking with

moisture. For a while we on the eastern coast had been revelling in sunshine, it was clear the rain in Andalusia had been violent and incessant.

Recalling the wild aspect of the sky, I did ask one or two guards—indifferent, of course, and smoking—'if the Cordova line was open.' But I got no direct answer, so in the dark (it was two o'clock in the morning and raining fiercely) I found a seat and said no more; Geronimo all the time utterly lost—I never even saw him. It is on occasions like this that his whole soul is absorbed in the care of his green *equipage.*

All went well (except rain in torrents) until eleven next morning, when at a small soaked little station, with a dismal outlook of drooping fowls, wet children, and muddy pigs, we came to a full stop.

'What is it?' asked I, catching sight of Geronimo clinging to his green box.

'*Nada*,' replied he, too lazy to inquire.

'But there is something,' I insisted.

'I will go and *preguntar*,' said he.

For a wonder he returned.

'*Mala tierra*,' says he, and vanished.

By this time everyone was more or less on the '*qui vive.*' Heads thrust out of windows, guards running, and gentlemanly *Jefes* in uniform carrying papers and despatch boxes. Then somehow I came to know that in the next compartment to me was the Ministro de Fomento, travelling down to Seville with money and supplies for the inundation which threatened to swallow up the city, and that further, the '*tierra*' was so '*mala*' that it was doubtful if our line (arching over the banks of the Guadalquivir) could bear the weight of the train. (An engine had been sent on to test it.) 'A bank had fallen in.' 'The rails had sunk.' 'We must go round by Portugal.' 'Stay where we were' 'Go back to Alcazar,' etc., etc. All this took place at Villino del Rey, two or three stations from Cordova.

A long time passed; the gentlemanly *Jefes* speeding about in uniform, the guards pulling long faces. Then an engine puffed, and we started.

It came in about ten minutes, a narrow—*very* narrow ledge between the river, lashed into an aquatic madness, on

one side, on the other a high ridge of white clay, *falling*. Over the terrible river hung the rails—*hollow*, on what resting I cannot say. I saw the black water boiling turbid beneath! I saw the white bank pealing down upon us like paste, with a hollow thud.

Here we stopped. There were at least a hundred half-naked, eager-eyed peasants up to their waists in mud and slush (excellent creatures!—who shall say Spaniards are idle?) working like Titans. Some shovelling out the white ridge that threatened to engulf us, others filling up the yawning rails with stones and sacking.

We were between two deaths—a landslip on one side and drowning in the Guadalquivir on the other. Every soul was on the steps and the footboards of the carriages except the minister. He, like Cæsar, would die alone, his *toga* draped around him (for we all expected to die, though no one said so). With the instinct of salvation we hung on to the land side, against the treacherous hill—to the door handles, to the brass bars—anywhere in the open; hung on for bare life. I with my bag and umbrella firmly clasped, though I scarcely should need them in the world whither I was going! Geronimo with his green *equipage*.

Now, it is all very well for people to talk of 'blood running cold,' 'hearts beating,' and 'limbs quivering,' in moments such as these. When you are in fear of death all this *may* happen, but unconsciously—the brain is far too busy to observe details. You live on the instant!

'Why cannot we get out?' I asked, in a whisper, and now my heart did beat—I could hear it. I turned deadly sick, and thought I was going, but terror kept me occupied.

No, we were not to stir, said the *Jefe*; we were safer in the carriages. Kind, but imperious.

In no other country in the world would a train have been allowed to proceed under such circumstances. Here life is as nothing, and the risk of it less.

Although I knew we looked death in the face, I felt no shrinking. We were in the hands of God—*all* of us—the whole train. What was I more than they?

Then we came to know we were to sit still and be pushed by hand over that yawning abyss—one carriage at a time! Awful moment! Slowly, slowly the wheels of the first

carriage turned—the minister inside—pushed by many willing hands in a dead silence. A cry, a shout, might bring down the rotten hill, or open out deadly holes over the river. How our eyes were riveted upon that carriage —our souls in them!—like shipwrecked mariners looking for a sail! If *that* carriage passed there was hope! If it fell—

See! It overtops the edge. It skims over the open space. It pauses on the brink! Ah! Now it moves again! God be thanked, it is safe—safe on the firm ground! Shall we in the next carriage pass also? This is a question we are all silently asking.

Alas! alas! our faces are blanched, our hearts silent. We dare not speak, we dare not move. After a long, long pause, and much muttered consultation, 'All to the further side, towards the hill,' cries a loud voice, and we obey like children. Creak, creak, go our wheels—thump, thump, our hearts. The peasants push! The weight is great; they pause! What a moment! What haggard faces! I call to mind one woman whose whole being seemed to have passed into her eyes! A man, livid, continually changing sides. Now in my carriage, then in the next (the doors were all open). He did not speak or cry. No one spoke, but his face looked *one scream!*

What an agony of suspense! We are just on the chasm!

How sick I felt, looking down at the boiling blackened river! Then creak, creak, creak—a long pull and a good one, and a pull all together, and we, too, are on firm ground!

There was no rebound. I was exhausted. The terror had been too long—almost two hours. I heard the voices of people about me—some laughing, some praying—but I was utterly done. Thankful, but so shaken I felt I should like to die.

When death was before me, I could not think; now the horror was overwhelming.

Arriving at Cordova at about four o'clock, we found ourselves the centre of thousands of people on the platform. Word had gone round that our train had capsized into the the river, and all perished. Appearing, we were welcomed as from the grave! A lady I never saw caught me in her

arms and kissed me, and a common man, with the utmost tenderness, took out his handkerchief to clean my cloak, caked with the white mud of that murderous bank.

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Because of the inundation, the hotel is full to overflowing. We run over each other day and night, and sit jammed sixty and seventy at dinner. Everyone wants to go somewhere and cannot because of the flood; the rails are all rotten, and not a river within its banks. Couriers and maids protest, but in vain; the hotel servants run for their lives, dogs and cats huddle in corners; an unfortunate donkey, who has to turn the water-wheel blindfolded, brays, and a brass band sets the whole household dancing.

Not a moment's quiet; a surge, a swell of humanity—in the corridor, the patio, the reading-room, and the hall. An Australian family, with a fair-haired *mees*, flirting with everything, wearing trousers (the manner, I suppose, at the Antipodes), and a rough papa, smoking a clay pipe at table. Little Miss Brown, a solitary female of limited means and clothing, always losing her concertina, invariably discovered under her chair. (She fell into a hole on the railway coming from Granada, in the middle of the night (Miss Brown), no moon, and, of course, no guard, and was rescued by a German whom she calls '*ein holder man.*')

A horsey Britisher and his thin wife, who change their destination every meal, announcing it to the Director, and then go nowhere, at which he—the Director—swears. A sherry merchant, to Jerez, to introduce his son, he—not the son—certainly an imbiber of his own liquor, and hazy in consequence.

A German, with a convulsive cough, which makes everybody sick (we bribe the waiters to remove him to a distance at dinner). Surly Spaniards of the lower class, and the Republican chief, El Pignal.

Day after day passes by in this fashion; day after day it pours, and the clouds gather and the waters swell. As long as it rains we are storm-stayed—I for one not inclined to risk my life again. At length some bold spirits venture forth, like doves from the ark; then timider ones follow, and at last I go.

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The rail from Cordova to Granada runs through green plains, bordering broad rivers, lonely and sad, with the pathetic look of the Roman Campagna. (I fancy I can always detect a country which has been devastated by war.)

Even now it is far from safe travelling: the rivers are terribly swollen, and the rail to Granada, whither I am bound, broken in four places and just patched up. (I know the look of it now perfectly. Labourers waiting for the train with red flags and spades, knee deep in mud, their keen black eyes watching our slow progress anxiously.)

Yet anything short of death was better than the chaos at Cordova. In this the W—s and I agree (an ill-matched pair with whom I am travelling, he blind and verging on seventy; she pretty and twenty-five). Naturally I address him as her father; see her blush, and apologise, at which she blushes the more.

Few villages occur on this line, the stations are but leantos, at rare intervals, with a reed-bordered garden all a-bloom in the moisture. From the Campo waft fresh odours of lavender and thyme, and the grassy valleys are 'sown with holly and arbutus.

That high-standing tower aloft is Montilla, famed for its wine. Not like Jerez. No doubt of genuine vineyards here; the hills are lined with them. Pomegranate orchards are in the valleys, and olive-trees, lofty as ancestral oaks—interminable avenues—stretching away over dimpling hills far as the eye can reach. Olives on the summits, olives in the clefts, olives in lonely glens through which pour swollen torrents. A dash of sunshine, narrowing downwards, lights up the branches into a blue-green tapestry, and the damp wind sweeps through, sounding a thousand rustic organ pipes, each in a different key, sad notes as of a stately rhythm.

But to return to Montilla.

All the vineyards belong to my friend Mr Hammick, of Pall Mall, and he says 'there is nothing in it.' The simple juice of the white grape left untouched for seven years, then bottled; the result, a golden nectar.

The great Captain Gonzalo de Cordova was born in the castle, one of the strongest in Andalusia, the cradle of the Aguilar race. When, through the rebellion of a nephew,

the Marquis of Priego, Ferdinand the Catholic blew it up, Gonzalo felt the affront keenly, but, loyal to his sovereign, he did not complain.

'Talk not to me,' replied he, to those who sought to irritate him into rebellion, 'of the destruction of the castle, but pity me for being the uncle of a traitor.'

At Puente Genil — the Genil a quiet common-place enough river here, but to overflow anon with war and poetry at Granada—we fall in with a black crowd, so large and eager we dared not get out. Several hundreds of decently clad men come down to meet the Republican leader, Pi Margal, unfortunately for us in the next carriage, stumping the country for the elections.

At his appearance at the window, the crowd swarm upon the steps like bees, and a feeble effort is made to cheer; but the Spaniards are not a demonstrative people, and it fails. Their welcome is to be read in the fire of gleaming eyes and fixed stern glances. Besides, numerous Guardias Civiles are watching on the platform and might interfere, as Pi Margal is an old conspirator, and with him are two or three well-known Communists.

At Bobadilla ill news awaits us. Another *trasbordo* (breakdown). Not from '*mala tierra*' this time (for the industrious natives had coopered up the rail), but from a collision.

We must walk between two trains in the middle of the night, and shall not reach Granada until the small hours of the morning. Heigho!

In the meantime a capital dinner is ready for us at the station, of which the W—s and I partake, on the Dugal Dalgetty principle, 'of not knowing when we shall see food again.' Again let me endeavour to remove a popular prejudice. The *fondas* on the Spanish rails are, as a rule, excellent, a regular *table d'hôte* for the express trains, and all sorts of cold fowl and game ready cooked, also tea.

While we eat, the commonalty outside are regaling themselves on palm shoots. There are also bunches of wild asparagus—I cannot say if this is eaten raw also, but the palms are much relished.

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Wait, wait, wait, no one can tell how long! No one can

complain. It is '*trasbordo.*' Mr W— submitting with a patience I have often noted in very old people, to whom time brings nothing, but we younger ones restless and discontented, pacing up and down. At last we are off, plunging into those blue mountain barriers I saw from the Sierra Morena at Cordova, wildly rearing their crests into snowy pinnacles across the plains, the sentinels of those impenetrable fastnesses which once separated the Christians from the Moors.

As we mount among dimly-lighted regions, rugged, barren, repulsive, without a tree or shrub to soften the hard lines, I get a peep at the cliff of the Peña de los Enamorados overhead. Here, on the mountain, as the tale goes, a Christian knight, who loved a Moorish maid, flung himself from the summit, clasping her in his arms, to escape the pursuit of an old Moslem father. And here, on the plain, we come upon our English friend, Earl Rivers, fresh from the laurels he has gathered at the siege of Loja, a bright figure in the landscape, mounted *à la Guisa*—meaning with long stirrups —on a bright chesnut war-horse, with azure trappings reaching to the ground; himself armed in proof, and wearing over his armour a short cloak of rich brocade. (I fear, judging from the chronicles, this 'ignorant Islander' was ostentatious and a sad fop, for to the cloak he adds 'a French hat with feathers, and is followed by pages attired in silk, and a train of English soldiers dressed after the fashion of the land,' however that may be.)

The earl, bareheaded, makes three profound reverences to Queen Isabel, who graciously condescends to compliment him on his valour, further condoling with him on the loss of his two front teeth, unhappily knocked out by the scimitar-hilt of a remorseless Moslem.

'But Earl Rivers might,' said Isabel, in her gentle voice, bending on him those full brown eyes history records, 'have lost the teeth by natural decay, whereas now the lack of them will be esteemed a glory, rather than a shame.' To which the earl, bowing to the saddle-bow, replies, that he returns hearty thanks to God for the honour her Majesty has done him in coming to meet him. That he is contented; nay, even happy in the loss of his teeth, seeing that it was sustained in the service of God and of her Majesty, for God, having

given him all the teeth he possessed, in depriving him of two, but opened a window in the house of his body the more readily to observe the soul which dwelt within.

As evening darkened we stopped to take in water at Loja, a lonely little town spread on a smiling hillside, the river Genil rushing beneath between high banks.

In the old days Loja was the key to Granada on that side. Here I meet for the first time that unfortunate person, Boabdil el Chico, last King of Granada, defending Loja in person against Cabra and Ponce de Leon.

Anon a terrible Mussulman on a black charger, followed by a band of savage Gomeres, sweeps forward, resistless as the simoon of the desert. The Christian knights, who had planted their banner on the heights, fall back. Honour is staked on either side. Neither will yield. In the valley—where the foaming river now turns peaceful mill-wheels—lay the whole Moorish host, Ferdinand's army on the ridge.

At the supreme moment when all seemed lost, the King emerges, at his side that noble cavalier, Earl Rivers, armed, as the chronicles say, '*en blanco*,' whatever that may be, a ponderous battle-axe in his hand, and behind a troop of stout archers, with bows of English yew.

'On! my merry men,' cries the earl, spurring his war-horse. Strange eyes are upon you in a strange land! On! For the glory of God and of Old England! St George for Merrie England!' and '*En avant*' was the reply, and the English bowmen, cutting about like lumberers in a forest, turn the day.

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After all our dreaded *trasbordo* was no great thing. The wild pass was alight with torches, thoughtfully put in by the *Jefe* at Archidona, and there was a feeble moon displaying yawning chasms, rugged rocks, precipitous cliffs, subterranean caves, and precipices overhanging frothing river-beds—a land ploughed as it were by earthquakes. The prostrate engine lying across the rails, beside which we step, followed by a stampede of boys with bags and luggage.

When I beheld through what a succession of mountain fastnesses the rail to Granada terraces upwards—heard the roar of torrents, descried the vague outlines of towering Alps mapped against the dark sky—the yawning precipices

and the general look of chaos on every side, I wondered much more that it ever got there than that it often broke down.

Where we were, and when we should arrive at Granada, was a profound mystery. Long pauses occurred at desolate stations, beside isolated platforms, and the invariable crowd to welcome Pi Margal, occasionally making a little speech and calling them 'his children,' all in wind and rain and long past midnight.

Stumping for the elections with a vengeance! But I am assured he will not be chosen. The general feeling grows more and more favourable to tranquillity and to the King, especially since 'the Left' have come into power. Spain dreads another Revolution as a burnt child dreads the fire, and the very name of Pi Margal is as a firebrand to light up a general conflagration.

About this time, forgetting Moors and Christians, I passed into the land of Nod, and only woke when at three o'clock a.m. the door of our carriage was flung open and a voice shouted 'Granada!'

CHAPTER XXXI.

GRANADA.—THE ALHAMBRA.

The 'City of My Dreams'—The Road to the Hotel—First View of the Alhambra—Gate of Siete Suelos—Scene from Hotel Windows—The Alhambra—Gate of Justice—Charles V.'s Palace—Plaza de las Algibes—The View and its Associations—Patio of the Albarca—The Great Hall—Tower of Comares—Cook's Tourists—Scenes from the Past—The 'Queen's Toilet'—Garden of the Sultana Lindaxara.

GRANADA! The city of my dreams! The land of war, mystery, and enchantment! Vermilion walled—and rich with running waters; dark-eyed houris, snowy patios, fairy peristyles crowded with Ethiop slaves, and filigree porticoes over grim-faced tyrants—where, under thickets of roses, Moslem knights waylay pearl-crowned Sultanas and turbaned kings clasp jewelled fingers!

Granada! A name of infinite suggestion in all ages. The African capital—the heart of Moorish Spain—the Alhambra rearing its ruddy buttresses and lofty bastions over the boundless Vega; the Vivarambla, the centre of tilt and tourney; the pillared Alcaiseria, gay with silken wares; the Zacatin, strewed with the luxury of Oriental commerce; the walled-in fortress of the Albaicin, commanding the Darro stream, and heaped up gorges; the two Alamedas, each with its dashing river; and the eternal snows of the Sierra Nevada backing all!

Alas! I rub my eyes and look round. Nothing of all this! Three o'clock in the morning; a platform inundated with garlic-smelling Communists; a dark, wild night, and a free fight for luggage with ruffians insisting on *pesetas*.

What they did with Señor El Pignal I do not know; but when he and his admirers were gone we had a chance of escape, and speedily availed ourselves of it by mounting into what looked like a canoe on wheels. Another free fight for the luggage from inside, and more *pesetas* to a wretch who said, 'We are four.' Then a plunging in darkness into what appeared to be a ploughed field with deep furrows; rolling from side to side—leaping rather; the wheels high up in the air, then coming down with a bang. To hold on was imperative.

The horses pull, the bells jingle, the driver lashes unmercifully. At last we are on a road. No one says a word. It is evidently normal.

We pass lines of high gaunt houses, the shops closed, the oil-lamps flickering; all, except in the square of the Carrera de Genil, where they were hard at it, with Señor El Pignal haranguing from a balcony in a rich baritone voice, a brass band accompanying in a tremolo, and every window illuminated and full.

Not to return to this troublesome personage again, I may here mention that I saw him next day at the Alhambra, followed by his political '*queue*,' like Robespierre carrying in his hand a nosegay, and that he partook of a public dinner at the Hotel de Siete Suelos at the early hour of two, leaving a large margin for eloquence and rebellion.

To return. Leaving the bright Carrera, we turn suddenly, swaying fearfully, up a dismal hill, as straight as a wall, and

as dark as Erebus. (I was thankful not to see it.) Then a sweet damp smell of moss and leaves, a bright light like a star at the end of a low arching avenue, and after many more plunges we draw up at the hotel.

(It is a great misfortune for travellers that the station is so far from the best hotels at the Alhambra. Not only is the road dangerous at night, but you become a helpless prey to extortion. I felt as if I had strewed that midnight road with *pesetas.*)

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I wake to find myself in a thick wood of tall elms, broken into broad walks and stately avenues, bordered by water-courses, fountains, marble benches, and gurgling streams. Heavenly vistas, where the sun glints down upon delicate mysteries of green network; and high above, line upon line, the dark red towers of the Alhambra, so near, I seem as if I could touch the ruddy turrets of the gate of the Siete Suelos across the road.

A little to the left rises another tower, red against the elms, and another, and another—then lower down, through groves of thickening elms, the Gate of Justice; the mighty castle walls between heaped with cactus and aloes, and here and there a pine.

Beautiful and awful! These blood-stained ramparts are rough and ragged; but there is a vitality about them, a massive power neither age nor war can quench. A ruin. Yes—but a ruin with life in it.

Thus the great Arab fortress comes to me, clothed in such sylvan beauty, so touched and sweetened by greenery and wood that I am lost in wonder and delight.

It seems quite inappropriate to say that these beautiful elms girding the Alhambra were planted by the great Duke of Wellington, yet so it is.

When visiting Soto de Roma, some five miles distant on the Vega (a domain given to him by the King of Spain at the close of the Peninsular War), the bare slopes caught his eye, and he planted and clothed them as they now appear.

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What a boon to travellers that there *are* hotels close to the Alhambra, I am saying now! It enables one to live there. The 'Siete Suelos' and the 'Washington Irving'

exactly opposite, glare at each other through defiant windows across the road; I declare for the 'Washington.' The 'Siete Suelos,' jammed up against the embankment of the Alhambra, is damp and dismal. There is no view, and dripping trees enshroud it. Besides, I nourish a special grudge against it, as marking the pathetic old gateway out of which Boabdil rode for the last time—an exile.

'Go,' said the unhappy monarch to the Christian troops which met him on the threshold; 'go and possess those fortresses which Allah has taken from me!'

Then, sorrowfully saluting them, he rode down into the plain, followed by a few faithful Moors.

As a last request he prayed Ferdinand never to 'permit another man to pass under that gateway,' and strange to say, in the general breach of faith, his desire was respected. From that day to this, four centuries ago, the gate of Siete Suelos has been walled up.

The 'Washington Irving' on the other side, from which I am writing, has sun, garden, and outlook over the tall elms, the clustered group of the Bermejo, or 'vermilion towers' below; the scented terraces of Madame Calderon's lovely *carmen* (villa) above; and dotted about, among gardens and shrubs, painted pavilions and miniature towers.

I cannot say much for the food—it is decidedly scanty; but I do not complain—as yet I am nourished by the wondrous beauty of the view.

Cool airs waft to me from the trees, birds chatter and chirrup, high up in the boughs tapping on my window-panes, in a friendly converse I long to understand, and the lights and shadows of a great wood fall upon my floor. I am myself a part and parcel of the tall trees; I go to bed with them and wake to find them near; not alone either, for a mimic world moves beneath. Horses straining up and down the awful hill, gay parties bound for picnics in the Vega, red oxen struggling with a fallen tree, a cook in his white cap looking on, the gipsy king seated on a marble bench in full *majo* costume, handling a guitar, a tethered donkey hee-hawing cheerfully, and several cats prowling about for birds.

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I enter the Alhambra by the three great arches of the Gate of Justice, one within the other, grandly barbaric, and pass

by the rude stone where the Moorish kings sat to administer justice. The ancient carved doors, massively simple, furnished with huge bolts, the narrow paved road intact, with sharp angles to baffle an enemy—a road only for horses or litters, the bricks orange-colour and glowing. Upon the outer arch, the mystic hand outstretched, the long thin fingers pointed downwards, not in relief, but carved on a slab of reddish stone; on the second arch the key. No one really knows what these symbols mean. Probably they are talismans. Then I follow by the steep walled-in road to the platform of the castle, curtained and screened by waving alleys of acacias and nespole, laburnum and lilac all a-bloom; a flowery barrier grateful to the eye, but unhappily not thick enough to shut out the stolid mass of Charles V.'s monstrous *Greco-Romano* palace, sheeted with mythological bas-reliefs and statues.

Not all the picturesque gardens Charles V. has created here on bastion and rampart (and they are many and lovely, and make one bless him twenty times a-day) can extort forgiveness for this eyesore. Such a cumbrous pile would be obtrusive anywhere, but here it is a crime, remembering that at least half the Alhambra—the fair Harem—and all the winter apartments were sacrificed to give it room.

Nor is this all. On the site of the ancient Mosque, the very spot where Boabdil el Chico, worked upon by the fiery words of his mother, La Horra, fought hand to hand with his vicious old uncle, El Zagal, and drove him from the walls, stands a common-place church, backed by a mean little street of houses. This on the platform of the Alhambra!

If you want to keep your temper you must put all this from you—put it by and fold it up among the shrubs and the branches, and keep your eyes well fixed on the outlines of the Torre del Vino, with its quaint quatrefoin arches and delicately-pencilled spandrils, bright with gaudy tiles, the majestic form of the Alcazaba (keep) rearing its battered front behind in the centre of a wondrous group of warlike towers, each with its tradition of battle and carnage, Hidalgo, de las Armas, Cuba, Polvora, red-coated Homenage, and the lovely flower-terraced outpost of La Vela, its silvery bell sounding at intervals through the night ever since the conquest of Granada—then through over-arching groves and

box-bordered parterres to the Plaza de las Algibes, the Moorish cisterns gurgling beneath, and gaze over the battlements at the view.

What a world of beauty! The Vega, emerald green, a blooming wilderness of pasture, *huertas*, *quintas* broken by white walls here and there—(once Moorish *carmens*); the river Genil a blue ribbon wandering between; a barrier of mountains set against a sky, grey-toned and sad—broken by gorges and defiles, rocky promontories and dark capes, each eloquent with histories of raid and foray, and the heavy tread of invading hosts—the pale line of the Elvira mountains to the west, and far afield, more glorious far, the blanched range of the Sierra Nevada, bringing cool airs. An arid sepia-tinted range lower down with broken chasm —'the last sigh of the Moor,' where departing Boabdil gazed for the last time on his lost kingdom; the airy palace of the Generalliffe perched like a white bird among dark cypress groves, backed by the naked outline of a brown hill—'the Seat of the Moor'—and deep below the rapid current of the gold-bearing Darro, thundering over rocks.

Astounding all this—lovely, rapturous indeed, and making one's heart beat wildly, but for all that, I am all the time asking myself, '*Where is the Alhambra?*'

A damp corner among flower-beds answers the question; a door no one would notice opens, and I stand within the patio of the Alberca, a marble-lined court, bordered by canals and fragrant hedges of orange and myrtle, a Moorish façade or frontispiece at one end, arcaded in three separate storeys, and at the other the yellow mass of the tower of Comares cutting the sombre sky.

How small it is! How simple! A charming patio, oblong and perfectly white, the primitive red-tiled roofs close on the eye, the stone carving on doors and archways by no means elaborate—all utterly unlike any representation of it in painting or plaster I ever saw. A gentle refinement is in every line, a refreshment in the cool walls and the pellucid waters, a domesticity, a naturalness — making the whole romantic history of the place seem homelike and probable.

It is only the vista through the huge tower of Comares, of the transparent lacework of five Moorish arches, leading to

the broad balconies of the Hall of the Ambassadors that strikes the keynote of wonder.

Yet even this, marvellous as it is, is an effect without glare, and with little adjunct of colour. Colour, indeed, in faint blues and yellows, and delicate vermilion touches damascened on the panels, and deeper tints on the glazed *azulejo* tiling of the dado, the vaulted *Antesonado* ceiling carved in cedar-wood, in the shape of a bark, in the pendent ornaments of the recessed alcoves and the borders and stuccoes of the cornice—but colour refined and softened, indicated rather than expressed, and neutral tinted, as all Oriental shades, and soft and sympathetic to the snowy whiteness of the walls.

(At this time of writing, seated upon a marble step within the Court de la Alberca, no amount of argument will convince me that these poetic walls were ever fully coloured. The Moors were too consummate artists to shock the eye by violent contrasts.)

Two long and narrow vestibules, of scarcely earthly beauty, precede the great Hall, sheeted with escutcheons, rosettes, circles, garlands, foliage, bosses, and flowers, pressed together closely in a network of arabesques, puzzling to the brain, and leaving you stupid with wonder.

Then, through twin arches of equal size, set with filigree edges, as of gems—a splendour to prepare the mind, as it were, for the awful presence of the monarch within the Hall of the Ambassadors, seated upon a golden throne, Abu Alahmar perhaps, of the children of Nasur—or Yusuf Abul—of so noble a presence, and with so black a beard, he inspires terror in all he looks upon—a glittering court assembled round of turbaned warriors, Christian knights, damask-robed emirs, grave judges, hoary lawgivers, holy imaums, and noble ambassadors—where the East meets the West in a rivalry of riches, knowledge and power, in this great fortress, the stronghold of the most warlike sovereigns in the world.

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'Lofty' is no word for the dark glories of this Oriental hall, rising like an aerial sphere fretted with golden stars—a hall big enough for Titans to play at bowls in with Genii, broken on three sides by deeply embayed casements divided by groups of slenderest pillars, the casements cut in walls of

such stupendous thickness, each bay forms, as it were, a separate chamber.

That the tower of Comares is the oldest part of the Alhambra is evident from the ponderous severity of the style, in harmony with nothing but the massive blocking of the outer walls, and the general sense of splendour and power, placing it at some far distant date, when the Spanish Moors were ruder and more warlike than they appear in the graceful frivolities of the Court of Lions, the meritricious decorations of the Halls of Justice, and the effeminacy of the painted baths.

Now the rough mosaic floor is crowded by a party of Cook's tourists of the promiscuous type one knows as travelling British—and even these are hushed. Some lean over the balconies—the head turns giddy as you gaze—to catch peeps through shrouding veils of quivering aspen and poplars; others point, speaking in whispers, to the red foundations rising over the trees, cleft by ominous rents (evidence of the many earthquakes which have shaken the pile), and two fair sisters, enshrouded in an Arab doorway, are sketching, in the vain hope of carrying away some memory of those towered embattlements, deep narrow glens riven within green ravines, smiling grassy slopes and flower-clothed orchards, black murky caves, where it is said dragons and monsters lie, the line of ruined aqueducts, the leafy shade of the Alameda, deep down beside the Darro, and opposite ridges ruin-crowned.

To me the scene dies out—the Hall present, indeed, but as a background, and before me rises a vision of dark heads and dazzling diadems, white turbans plumed and starred with trembling gems, and close-fitting garments, pearl sown —of those bearded men, before whom stands the renowned knight, Juan de Vega, despatched from Cordova to demand of the fiery old tyrant, Muley Ben Hassan, the tribute extorted by the Christians since the conquest of St Ferdinand.

As Juan in full armour faces the king to deliver his message, a bitter smile curls his lips, and his hand seeks the handle of his scimitar.

'Tell the Spanish sovereigns,' says Muley, in a voice tremendous with rage, 'that the sovereigns of Granada who paid tribute are all dead. My mint coins nothing but dagger-blades and lances.'

In the vaults beneath the tower of Comares, still to be

seen, Ayxa la Horra, Muley's wife, was imprisoned—his *oldest wife*, mark—to make room for a young Christian rival, Isabel de Solis. But La Horra, a woman of uncommon sense and courage, let herself down with scarfs and shawls from the ramparts and escaped, just as Marie de Medici did at the Castle of Blois centuries later—only La Horra carried with her her little son, destined to reign under the name of Boabdil '*the Unlucky*.'

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Nothing can be sweeter than the low-pillared *loggia*, hung over a giddy height conducting to a *mirador*, where the muezzin called the hours of prayer. And here I come upon a new history, for the little frescoed chamber at the end, about nine feet square, called 'The Queen's Toilette,' dedicated by the melancholy Bourbon Philip to his beautiful young wife Elizabeth Farnese, who as Italian and Parmanese was to be treated to chambers in the Italian style, painted with sea-nymphs and Cupids, and the marble floor perforated to let in perfumes and hot air—a retreat altogether worthy of the royal beauty, trailing her silken robes, and of her friend, that little maid, Jacinta, singing to her lute, destined to rouse the hypochondriac Philip to the conviction that he is not dead.

Near by was the Queen's bedroom, now shut up (Washington Irving slept there), overlooking the delicious garden of Lindaraxa.

There are many fair gardens within the circle of the Alhambra—mostly formed by Charles V.—but none so fair as this, flushed with the glory of sun and colour, and sweet with the scent of violets and orange-bloom, spirea and lilac—glittering butterflies and dragon-flies flashing around.

And the old-fashionedness of it! The genuineness! In the midst, an alabaster basin, which still shoots forth showers of silvery spray, and Moorish arcades all round, where a motley crowd gathered of slaves, dancing-girls, conjurors, cither-players, pages and mutes, awaiting the Sultana Lindaraxa's pleasure—she lying loose-robed in draperies of tissue, under a purple tent, on a divan of mother-of-pearl and gold, bowls of clove-pinks, and attar-roses set about, and balsams and perfumes mixing with the damp vapour of runnels of water, and fairy-like cascades.

CHAPTER XXXII.

GRANADA.—THE ALHAMBRA CONTINUED.

Court of Lions—Unwelcome Intruders—Hall of the Abencerrages and its Legend—Hall of Justice—Hall of Las dos Hermanas—Church or Mosque?—Torre de las Infantas—The Three Sisters and the Christian Knights—Escape—Zorahayda Remains—La Cautiva.

INTO the Court of Lions I entered with bated breath, my first feeling of the unparalleled lightness and purity of the whole, then astonishment that anything so fragile should be real.

For the two pavilions which stand forward are all pillars. and the range upon range of snowy arches so fretted they might be wrought in gossamer or a cloud. If architecture at all, an Oriental fantasia answering to a *sarabande* in dancing, or a *pizzicato* in music. Later one grows reconciled to all this from the exceeding beauty of the whole; but then the question arises, 'Why so many pillars with nothing to support?' A case of *trop de zèle* on the part of the architect—Pillars for pillars, as fine as arrows truly, and perfect in their aërial symmetry, still shorn of a purpose, specially in the pavilions, where they are triply grouped.

I think the artistic sense resents all this frivolity a little, and the feeling increases with each successive visit, that graceful as is the whole, such florid embellishments clog the sense with a conviction of decadence.

No question of strength and power here, as in the tower of Comares; all late Moorish, almost Chinese. I feel disappointed and angered at this emasculate style. Is it possible that repeated copies have vulgarised the Court of Lions to my eyes? No; for the imitations are to the original 'as I to Hercules.'

The crowd of chattering tourists I meet *do* vulgarise it greatly. You marvel whence they all come from, but they swarm. Some rushing in apparently just as they land, bedraggled and travel-stained, bonnets awry, great-coats and travelling caps; others in jaunty toilettes of red and green, with cock's feathers to match; long dresses, muddy and

trailing on the delicate marble squares, and all loud-voiced and with vindictive airs of self-appropriation.

When will the Saxon, east or west, learn to behave decently on his travels, and conceal his violent egotism? It is my belief, if you sat long enough in the Court of Lions you would see the whole English-speaking world.

I am specially persecuted too by a French courier shouting out the different spots—'*Voila la plus telle*,' etc.—from a hand-book, and a Spanish party taking photos, whose loud shouts of laughter so awoke the sullen stillness of the old Moorish halls, that I expected each instant some visible manifestation of the offended dead, the ghosts of the murdered Abencerrage perhaps, whose blood mingled with the fountain, said to wail and sigh in the sough of the midnight wind; El Zagal, the blood-thirsty uncle of Boabdil, who, when he saw him enter this court as a captive, was so exultant that he cried out, 'God is great: let no man henceforth call me "the Unlucky;"' or the shade of the valiant Musa, loud of speech and stern, with flashing eyes, sitting within the lacy arcade listening to the demands of Ferdinand's herald that he should surrender. 'Does the Christian King think us greybeards or old women with distaffs, that we should yield with swords in our hands? Let him know that sweeter far to the African is a grave in the ruins of the Alhambra than the richest couch in his proudest palace!'

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But nothing happened: steps went and came; the courier's voice died out in hollow murmurs amid the halls; the Spaniards, when they had laughed enough, addressed themselves to eat; the fountain splashed and a timid bird dropped from a neighbouring pinnacle to drink.

I like immensely the easy way the marble lions group themselves round the marble basin, cocking their heads and tails at the visitors with a defiant air. Deformed as they are, and square and clumsy, and treated only as machines for pipes and water-conduits, with iron spouts rudely thrust through their nose, they have a knowing look about them, as of animals accustomed to pageants and murder—a half-human perception of what *has* happened, and an intelligent disapproval of what *is* happening, marking them as lions of

judgment, independent in their minds, and impervious to prejudice.

Round the Court of Lions are ranged what are esteemed the most stately of the halls—all, like the Court, late Moorish in style.

The hall of the Abencerrage (entered by noble doors, studded with wooden mosaic, and canopies of golden stalactites in the angles to which tender tintings still linger) is the smallest under the colonnade of the Court of Lions.

The legend goes that Muley Hassan, father of Boabdil, incited to jealousy of his young Christian wife by a treacherous Zegri, invited to a feast the whole tribe of the Abencerrage, thirty-eight in number, and caused them to be brought out into the court one by one and massacred. Nor are stains in the marble wanting to prove it, which, if you would enjoy the full poetry of the scene, I advise you not to consider as rust, but to accept as veritable blood-stains browned by the lapse of centuries.

At the east end the Hall of Justice opens in a long arcade, divided into three separate chambers by six filigree arches of transcendent beauty, unsupported by pillars (this felt as a relief). Each chamber or hall complete in itself, and lighted by tinted cupolas; honey-combed recesses at each end, as for vestibules, the whole sheeted with veils of richest lacework just touched with colour; the effect as of an enchantment which must have robbed justice of its sting and turned death into a pæan, but for the consciousness of a low arch parting the glorious walls, leading into a black hole, and the grim images of African judges (the only personation of human figures found within the Alhambra) sitting solemnly overhead in the curves of the spandrils on a gold background, with turbaned hoods and flowing beards, grasping the double-handed sword of Justice. (No wonder that the Moslem held that the builder of the Alhambra dealt in the black art, and was a magician.)

Now I am conscious that I could have written all this better if a party of six Englishwomen in mushroom hats had not come in and gossiped about London parties. Alas! alas! Will *anyone* tell me the country free from travelling British, and I will fly to it!

I know that in this hall Ferdinand and Isabel heard their

first mass after entering the Alhambra in triumph, the great Cardinal Mendoza officiating; but I find I do not care about the Catholic sovereigns at all, and look on them for the moment in the light of intruders.

I have no thought but for the creators of these resplendent halls, opening one into the other with such unparalleled harmony; the luminous tracery and ivy-like detail of Cufic letters, in rare borders, shells like the delicate lines upon a woman's ear, flowers, festoons and transparent arabesques—truly the apotheosis of Saracenic art, after which that once stern and masculine architecture stooped to decay.

Yet here I am in the hall of Las dos Hermanas ('The Sisters' two pure slabs of white marble let into the floor) in the wildest state of admiration, and ready to contradict every word I have just written before the lovely virginal beauty of these walls, and that fretted alcove or *ventana* overlooking the garden of Lindaraxa—altogether the most ravishing thing human eye ever beheld.

Now I am on a dark stair opening from the Patio de la Alberca, leading into a damp little patio, a front like an Egyptian temple on one side, and on the other an embroidered niche or Mihrab, a sanctuary for the Koran; then through a side door into the so-called church, a mosque all the same—spite of whitewash and alteration on the part of pious Ferdinand and Isabella, doing their utmost to transform it into a *Capilla Real* with all possible speed—imperial crowns on the part of their grandson, Charles V., in every available spot, his Hercules-pillars and motto, *Ne plus ultra*, in *azulejo* tiles, a sculptured wooden altar in gold, like a drawing-room mantelpiece from Philip IV., and a glaring gilded gallery, or royal pew, under the roof, in the worst possible taste, put up by the first Bourbon Philip V.—all of no avail, this being the most obstinate old mosque ever was seen, and quite infidel, spite of kings and queens—altogether refusing to be Christian, with its ancient raftered ceiling of cedar-wood, strange Eastern columns twisted and wreathed, slender Arab pillarettes, and the dim memories of Sultan Yusuf, who, being shut up here alone at the hour of midday prayer, was set upon by a madman, and found weltering in his blood.

I am sure at night there are strange transformation scenes

down here, and that out of some dark niche the hoary form of a muezzin emerges to call the faithful at the hour of prayer, and that a ghostly imaum creeps forth reciting the Koran to shadowy Moors—a silent multitude, faded and dim, raising lamentations; and that a certain grey cat, very uncanny in its ways, and always prowling about in the shadows for imaginary mice, is no other than the transmogrified form of the murdered Yusuf, watching mysterious treasures deposited beneath.

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I am perfectly charmed with the Torre de las Infantas, one of the most enchanting little nests eye ever looked upon; worthy to be the abode of the three Moorish princesses Zayde, Zorayda, and Zorahayda, we read of in Irving's 'Alhambra.'

You go down to it through the grassy desolation of the central plateau of the Alhambra. At a vine-covered cottage a woman appears with a key, and leads you to a narrow doorway studded with heavy nails, in the midst of a little garden enclosed by a trellis-work of reeds overhung with jasmine and roses. The door opens, and a tiny embroidered vestibule leads to a patio, centred by an alabaster fountain, in white; the walls traced and panelled in virginal patterns of fragile network, fretted arches, angles worked in snowy stalactites, delicate marble pillars, and filigree everywhere. An arched gallery runs round, with Saracenic arches, dividing the space into the sweetest little chambers for the sisters, not forgetting their governess, the discreet Kadiga. To the right, Zayda's chamber, bare now, but to my eye draped with cloth of gold, as befits the pomp of an elder Infanta; opposite, her sister's, barricaded with steel mirrors, for Zorayda loves to look at her fair face; the little one, Zorahayda, in an embroidered niche, all filigree like a casket, close to the cushioned couch occupied by Kadiga. Not a stone out of place; a perfect little house in admirable preservation, thanks to the care of Señor Contreras, the archæologist of the Alhambra. Only to move in beds for the divans, and chairs and tables, and banks of flowers for the fountain, and you might live there as in a dream.

You look up into a lofty cupola lined with wrought wood, and out of every window (but few, as you are in a tower of

defence), over the gorge of the Cuesta de los Muertos, where, through latticed *jalousies*, the sisters recognised the Christian knights they had seen and loved at Salobreña—alas! labouring as captives on hard rocks!

Just to think of it! Such adorable cavaliers, in the flower of youth, with the presence of Paladins and the beauty of Amadis de Gaul. Eyes that breathed the very soul of love; and the sweetest heads of hair, not shaven and confined, like Moslems', under the folds of turbans, but hanging loose in graceful curls upon their necks—captives—loaded with chains!

'The one in green!' cries Zorayda, thrilling all over, as she leans out of the casement. 'He is my knight! What grace! what elegance!'

'The crimson one!' exclaims the intrepid Zayda, with sunlight in her eyes. 'I love him best. He never can be a slave!'

The gentle Zorahayda says nothing, but tears gather in her eyes as she steals down furtive glances at her knight—hiding behind the discreet Kadiga, who drives them all in—wringing her hands and protesting mightily.

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I see it all, so small and so perfect—the sisters in tunics of white satin and gemmed waistbands, with trousers of Broussa gauze, lined with rose colour; the most adorable little gold caps upon their heads twinkling with coins—raising their jewelled arms aloft at the sight of their lovers! Vases of roses and tuberose beside them; and behind the spray from the alabaster fountain, falling back in a pale mist.

Now they are in and out among the flowers, tending the linnets and nightingales hung up in golden cages: the pensive Zorahayda, with pallid cheeks, pausing now and then to handle the stops of her silver flute and sing a plaintive ballad; handsome Zorayda taking occasional glances at a mirror to fix a red rose in her coal-black hair; and tall supple Zayda leaning over the abyss, and measuring with her eye the distance which divides her from her knight!

In a recess behind the white patio, a snow-white corner has been turned into a tiny kitchen, where Kadiga is cooking an excellent *ragoût;* and while she stirs the silver *casserole* she protests in exclamation: 'Were ever such

maidens? Daughters of a Sultan! To stoop to Christian slaves! *Ay de mi!* Illustrious in their own land, I warrant me—princes, doubtless; kings, perhaps. But here, slaves! Think of that—under the lash! Oh, sweet Infantas!—daughters of the Left-Handed. If he did not shut us up here we should see many merry things—and those dear princes! Alas! we are no better than they—prisoners and captives!'

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Thus weeks passed until a certain night that a full moon rose over the Silla del Moro, and tipped with silver the dark line of castellated towers running along the rocky ravine—La Cautiva, Picos, and the rest—when a low whistle from the abyss strikes upon impatient ears, and the flash of a lance breaks through the folds of darkness, telling that the Christian knights have escaped and are below in the shadow, together with that benevolent renegade, Hussein Bey—a fit match for Kadiga.

Sure enough there they are waiting beside the brook, which still rushes downward in its stormy course to the Darro. There also above, at the casement, is the discreet Kadiga fully prepared, fastening a strong cord to the bars of one of the pillared windows. . . .

When all is ready she hastily descends, the sisters after her; all but Zorahayda, who clasps her little hands and casts wistful glances into the gloom. Now her hand is on the cord. Then she trembles all over, and withdraws it. Another peep below, and again the white little hand stretched out. No, she cannot.

Again and again she gazes down wistfully. She sees the glittering armour of her Christian lover, ready to receive her with extended arms—listens to her sisters' voices, hushed, though exultant, as each mounts beside her own gallant knight, the discreet Kadiga firmly embracing the broad waist of Hussein.

'Too late, too late!' she whispers to the cold knight. 'Leave me, dear sisters. Go forth and be happy. Here in this tower I shall live and die!'

And so she did—the gentle Zorahayda—yet not to die, for she still lives a charmed life in the spirit of the fountain, when it boils and bubbles at midnight, and takes the form

of a Moslem princess, flower crowned, carrying a silver lute. So at least the woman with the key told me, and that a soft voice is heard when the moon is at the full, singing a low lament, 'Ay de mi! Zorahayda;' and a white head is seen watching the moon from the window, as it mounts and mounts over the Generalife.

. . . . . .

I have scarcely left myself space to speak of the next tower along the ravine of the Cuesta des Muertos—'La Cautiva' frowning down in vermilion shadows over the abyss. But it is lovely also—not laid out as a house like the Torre de las Infantas, but with a central patio, lined with *azulejo* tiles, under exquisite wall pencillings, where tender tints of blue and gold still linger.

La Cautiva, 'The Captive,' no other than our fair friend Isabel de Solis—shut up until she consents to wed the old Moor, Muley Hassan who had seized her, it is said, at the altar, in one of those rapid raids beyond the Vega for plunder.

'What good to resist him?' reasons a discreet Kadiga of that day. 'He is old and hideous with his hoary beard, and doubtless your Christian bridegroom will break his heart. But that cannot be helped. You will be free. Better be queen of an ogre than shut up here.'

So, being a joyous maiden, Isabel, after a time, consents to smile, and is known in Moorish annals as the Sultana Fatima, who bore Muley two children and made him hate his elder wives, especially, as I have said, the bitter-tongued La Horra of whom I have spoken, whose son, Boabdil, stood first in line of succession, to the prejudice of Fatima's sons.

We shall meet Fatima by-and-by at the Generalife.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

GRANADA CONTINUED.—THE CATHEDRAL, ETC.

Aspect of the Town—A Degraded Population—Impudent Beggars—Gipsies—Various Sights—The Cathedral—A Mixture of Styles—The Capilla Real—Tomb of Ferdinand and Isabella—Tomb of Philip and Juana—Relics of Ferdinand and Isabella—The Cartuja—An Eccentric Driver—Gate of Elvira—View from Steps of the Cartuja—The Cloister and its Frescoes—Church of St Geronimo—Grandeur of Interior—Tomb of Gonzalo de Cordova—Retablo over High Altar—The Great Captain.

THE ancient city of Granada is a queer old place, neither Christian nor Arab, Iberian nor Gothic, yet by a complete lack of individuality partaking of each, bare and poverty-stricken—as of a town in rags, fully displaying the Spanish characteristic of no two houses alike in height, colour or shape, but each obstinately established on a principle of its own.

Its merits, such as they are, subjective; not the Alhambra, but lying in its shadow, not wide or noble, nor sweet-scented either, but with whitewashed walls broken by Arab arcades and sculptured portals. No majestic heights, but abrupt hills, cactus crowned, with ruined churches; no outline of Moorish walls or turreted towers, but mouldering bastions crumbling into dust; no Oriental dwellings, but grey, decaying patios on which the finger of the past so stamps itself, that the East cries out articulate; no Moslem *zok*, but the old bazaar breaking out into a trumpery shopping street; no ancient gates, but modern ones so heavy with Moorish memories, the very stones grow eloquent.

If the brigands have left the Sierra, they have settled in the town. The dismal tales of robbery are endless. As all sin alike, you call for redress in vain.

In all Southern Spain I have met with no such degraded population. I cannot assign a cause, I merely state the fact. As a mountain district, in little contact with the outer world, one might expect to find in Granada some patriarchal traditions of the Mussulman rule. At Cordova one clearly perceives it in the quiet dignity of the streets

and the courteous reticence of the people. The houses, too, are exclusive and disdain all fellowship, but here the people jeer at you as they pick your pocket, draw knives at festivals, and murder at funerals. Not at all what the great Cardinal Ximenes intended when he came in person to baptise the infidels at Granada, and with a flowing hand scattered the regenerating drops, from a mop or hyssop, over three or four thousand at a time; one obstinate infidel only opposing conversion, and at once taken into custody, and so scourged and starved, that in three days' time he reappeared protesting that a vision had revealed to him the error of his ways.

No asking here of a '*limosna* por Dios' humbly, and kissing the coin received, as in polite Andalusia; but '*Parlez-vous Français?*' from a stinking urchin hanging on to your skirts for the opportunity of slipping his hand into your pocket. 'You speakee Ingles—give me a *perro*,' from another little brute running out from a dirty corner and turning wheels in your path (one wretch pursued me thus for two mortal hours, and was only driven off at last by a friendly shopman brandishing a broom).

'Is your bonnet from Paris?' asks a black-skinned *muchacha*, eyeing you all over, her finger to her nose, and insolent if you do not answer her.

You are plagued with lottery tickets you do not want, and bothered with matches, nuts and oranges. The gipsies, who burrow in the caves cut out in the steep sides of the Darro, torment you also, but they at least, if predatory, are polite.

'May I tell the *hermosa Señora* her fortune? She has a lucky face,' whispers a handsome Gitana, with flowers enough in her dark hair to stock a garden, into my ear. 'Will the *dama* give the *niña* a little dress, an old pair of shoes, or a shawl?' at which the walnut-skinned baby plants itself before me, swinging to and fro in an incipient fandango, while a gaily-jacketed papa thrums a guitar and tries to look enticing.

You go down to Granada through the great Duke's feathery elms, by the gate of 'Sommo Carlo,' and the deep street of Los Gomeles, to gaze on many things. First and foremost the Alhambra, nowhere seen to such advantage as when towering in sombre grandeur above the town, also

to make personal acquaintance with the rivers Darro and Genil, chasing each other through the streets like two athletes; the Plaza de Vivarambla, once the rallying place of Islam chivalry, the bull-fights of Gazul, and the elegant tournaments of reeds—now piled with oranges and fish; the flat, picturesque front of the Archbishop's palace, where Gil Blas imprudently offered suggestions and lost his place; the carved façade of the Ayuntamiento transformed into a linen manufactory, and the Madresa, or Seminary of the Moor, every trace of its Eastern origin weeded out by bigotry.

The Cathedral excites your curiosity in a languid way, if anything can excite it in the presence of that astounding fortress above, and I have a vague idea of hiring a carriage to visit the Cartuja.

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Before I enter the Cathedral I hate it, because it stands on the site of the ancient mosque. Who knows how marvellous that was? Here one must measure havoc against excellence: the nobler the Moslem monument, the more ruthless the ruin. Nor is the building striking in any way; neither classic nor Roman, Gothic nor Middle Age, it is an attempt at all. I grow specially savage when I remember that it was to the embossed doors of the old Mosque that the hair-brained knight of Pulgar, when he entered Granada at dead of night in company with fifteen companions as wild as himself, nailed to the panels a tablet inscribed in large letters *Ave Maria*, then, remounting his steed, rode away before the Moorish guards had time to catch and punish him. Except St Peter's, I never saw a church so decked and garnished—not a church at all, but an ecclesiastical drawing-room. Being Holy Thursday, the altar, a mountain of light, was dressed with pots of box and odoriferous plants, on which hung innumerable cages of canaries and linnets, singing lustily.

There are five naves and a central dome gaudily painted, with nothing to relieve it but the subdued glow of superb altar retablos filled with dark pictures, mostly by Cano, a grand carved figure of Santiago on horseback, and some curious portraits in the Antequera chapel.

In my own mind I class this heterogeneous Cathedral

with those of Malaga, Valencia and Cadiz, the most inartistic in Spain.

A pert little boy (all the boys *are* pert in Granada) dragged me through splendid iron gates into the Capilla Real, where, under the shadow of sculptured canopies, heavy with the pride of heraldic eagles, escutcheons, war shields, mediæval altars, and Gothic vaultings, are two alabaster tombs, a marvel of workmanship, erected by Charles V. to the memory of his grandparents and parents.

I mostly concerned myself with Isabel's. There she lies, tall, marble-throated, abundant-haired and regular-featured, with the shoulders of a goddess and the gesture of a queen —the mask of a noble soul in a fair frame. A frigid smile lingers upon her stony lips, her aspect serene 'as moonlight sleeping on snow,' as she turns her head lovingly towards Ferdinand, whom to exalt her life was spent.

But, oh vanity of all earthly things! Not as a mourning widower surviving her for seventeen years, but as the aged bridegroom of a young beauty, Germaine de Foix, niece to the King of France—but constant at least in death, and yearning for his first love, Ferdinand was interred beside Isabel at his own request, and there they rest together, waiting the Judgment Day.

Not so their daughter, mad Juana, and her fickle Burgundian. Their countenances are averted, their position is as uneasy as were their lives. Troubled lines wander over their forms, and the comely head of Philip sinks on a marble pillow in selfish rest.

The four coffins lie in a narrow cell beneath, iron girt—'a small place,' said their son and grandson, Charles V., when he saw it, 'for so much greatness.'

In the sacristy, the fattest woman I ever saw opened the glass door of an ancient carved press which had belonged to Isabel. The appearance of this woman so overcame Geronimo, that after desperate efforts to save his manners, he burst into a loud laugh, which she on her side resenting, slammed to the doors, and declared 'that if that *cabellero malo* did not leave the sacristy, *she would*—' Upon which Geronimo, much crestfallen at his involuntary rudeness, temporarily disappeared. Then I was permitted to examine the standard which floated before the Catholic

sovereigns in battle; a Gothic circlet, called Isabel's crown, Ferdinand's sword, plain, short, and strong, with a look of hard work about it—Isabel's missal, a portable altar carried in her campaigns, and a golden box or casket containing her jewels, placed by herself in the hands of Columbus when funds were scanty for his first voyage, and returned by him filled with virgin gold.

Upon the altar stand two small wooden statuettes of Ferdinand and Isabella, interesting as contemporary portraits, spite of repeated coats of paint and varnish: Isabel in a brocaded robe, cut in the body extremely low, with hanging sleeves, her long auburn hair confined under a jewelled coif; Ferdinand in armour, middle-sized and bright eyed, his abundant locks loose upon his brow.

Shakespeare says of Ferdinand, 'the wisest monarch that ever ruled in Spain.' But the question is how much of this 'wisdom' was due to the policy of his far-seeing and adoring wife, and to the illustrious servants who so loyally carried out his will, receiving in return nothing but ingratitude? Such men as Cardinal Ximenes, Gonzalo de Cordova, Ponce de Leon, Columbus, and many more, famous in the page of history as illustrating the glory of a brilliant epoch?

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I am bound to say the far-famed Cartuja disappointed me. I went to it through the street of Elvira, full of holes, and the Plaza del Trionfro, a rugged square, planted with scraggy trees, the resort of dogs and beggars.

All this sounds easy enough on paper, nevertheless it was not accomplished without much alarm, the driver and his horses having, it seemed, a chronic disposition to accidents.

He commenced by running down a Guardia Civil, who, considering that his person is by law sacred, and to touch him in the execution of his duty punishable by *death*, caused a terrible commotion, retaliated by the *cochero* with a shower of blows on the backs of his innocent horses, to which they responded by standing on their hind legs. Then we overturned a stall of oranges, the property of a surly dame, who uttered dismal shrieks as we just shaved past her—both disasters, I must confess, mainly due to the desire of

the good-natured *cochero* to explain everything to me—especially the Gate of Elvira, over which he informed me the body of a certain Infante Don Pedro was set up, skinned and stuffed by the Moors after a fight known as the battle of the 'Fig-tree;' also the spot where a poor lady was executed during the last revolution, for only having in her possession a Constitutional flag.

But the *cochero*, continually looking round and jerking his reins, did not know, or did not remember, that it was from the gate of Elvira that El Rey Chico rode forth in his salad-days, according to the ballads, with

> 'Caftans blue and scarlet, and turbans pleached of green,
> A waving of the crescents and of plumages between,'

to fight the Conde de Cabra, and that as he passed under slowly, the better to gaze at *las damas* assembled on the walls, the head of his lance struck against the arch and was broken, at which Boabdil laughed; but when his mother La Horra heard of it, she wrung her hands, and his favourite Sultana, Morazma, shed many tears.

From the double flight of steps leading to the portal of the Cartuja, I gaze over a lovely landscape, bright in the sunshine. The verdant expanse of the emerald Vega, mapped by streams; the far-stretching Sierra de Elvira, parting into rocky gates towards the ancient Moslem capital of Jaen; Soto de Roma, the Duke of Wellington's, once a famous border tower, the scene of many a fray, now a white-fronted house in a dark patch of wood; the ruins of Santa Fé, on a bare crest—a city built as a permanent camp by Ferdinand and Isabella during the ten years' siege of Granada, the site marked by two columns, which a long sight can detect; and the bridge of Pinos, a single arch spanning the Genil, noted as the spot where Columbus halted when he left the Court and was called back by Isabel's messengers.

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In the cloisters there is a most dismal exhibition of frescoes—Carthusians hanging in rows like slaughtered sheep—Carthusians disembowelled, chopped up, rent asunder, boiled in hot oil, and frozen in ice; some with heads, some without—a sickening spectacle, respecting which, I am in-

formed by another fat female, acting as guide, that 'all this happened in *Londres*, when *El Rey Enrique* married the Protestant Anna Boleyn!'—evidently an exhibition of monkish spite in revenge for the repudiation of Catherine of Arragon.

Even so near the Alhambra the ornamentation of the Cartuja passes all belief: doors, dados, walls—inlaid with tortoiseshell, mother-of-peal, jasper, and ivory; the marbles of the Sanctum Sanctorum, brought from the Sierra Nevada, exquisite in tints of red and green; the cupola painted by Palomina—a carved figure of San Bruno by Cano, life-like, and gold and gilding enough to take away one's breath.

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Every fool goes to stare at the Cartuja, but few are the wise who visit the old church of St Geronimo, close by.

I sought it in a pilgrimage to the tomb of the great Captain Gonzalo, and find a venerable structure, grey with age, solitary and brooding. Grass grows in the patio, and the steps are crumbling, but neither time nor neglect can silence the significance of the inscription on the sculptured front, 'Gonzalo Ferdinando à Cordova, Hispanorum Duci, Gallorum ac Turcorum Terrori'—world-wide words, true to the letter!

Yet, noble and pathetic as all this is, and the fact that this church, began by Spain in his honour, was finished by his widow, it did not prepare me for one of the grandest Gothic monuments in Spain.

Oh! that I could call it up as I saw it, lighted by the radiance of an eastern sun, the vaulted ceiling knotted in broad bands into bosses, leaves and borders—a single flattened arch, inspired by the brain of some master architect, holding up the nave, and chapels, pictures, golden retablos and sculptured saints, subdued to the dim splendours of a bygone time!

Before the steps of the high altar, under a flat stone (like William the Conqueror's tomb at Caen), lay the great Captain. But the French, under Sebastiani, still bitter, after centuries, against the master-hand which drove them from Naples like a flock of sheep, tore down his banners and desecrated his tomb. Where he rests now, or if he rests at all, no man can answer. Alas! for the great Captain!

On either side of the altar, surmounted by the most

magnificent retablo of fifty grouped figures, carved in wood and coloured to the life, in separate compartments—kneels his marble effigy opposite his wife.

Gonzalo, represented as he was in life, of extreme personal beauty, his brow time-worn and earnest, his expression calm and immovable. Just the look he wore when his rebellious Biscayans levelled their pikes at his breast for more pay, and told him that if he wanted money he might sell his baggage of a daughter to the Jews.

'Higher, you saucy knaves, higher with your pikes!' cried Gonzalo, contemplating them with his calm eye, 'else you will run me through in earnest.'

The great Captain laughed and made a jest of it, but the next morning the dead bodies of Biscayans were swinging in the sight of the whole army.

It was Gonzalo who said, 'A commander must be victorious, *coûte que coûte.* He can make reparation afterwards.' When urged in a desperate engagement to retreat, he replied,—'I would rather make two steps forward into my grave than one backward to win a hundred years of life.' A general who, like great Cæsar, took no pleasure in slaughter, but was ready to shed rivers of blood in the path of duty; entering into all the hardships of his soldiers with a gaiety and courteousness which made them adore him; possessed of an eloquence which imposed even on his enemies—dignified, magnificent, hospitable—the heart of a lion in a frame of bronze.

Gonzalo closed the era of chivalry. The days of Bayard and poetic valour were past, but a twilight still lingered in acts of desperate personal courage, and an heroic love of daring adventure. A period of transition in the art of war; mediæval tactics giving place to modern strategy and the morals of the day, treachery and cunning. But a fine sense of honour tempered even his misdeeds. His judgment in peace equalled his skill in war, and the illustrious son of an illustrious race, his career marks an after-glow of that romantic time when knight-errantry shone as a lamp amid a darkened world. Gonzalo's honours descended to the son of his daughter, Elvira, and are continued to our day in the person of her descendants, the Dukes of Sessa, Grandees of Spain.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

GRANADA CONTINUED.—GOOD FRIDAY.

Funeral of Our Lord—Scenes in the Crowd—The Procession—La Tumba de Cristo—The Virgin.

AT five o'clock on Good Friday I went down to the Plaza to see the procession. Every window was full, ever decent person in black, and the open spaces crammed with a scrambling multitude. No national costume, but a great deal of colour, and a general aspect of beggary and destitution.

I never beheld so many absolutely poor people assembled together in my life. Hardly a lace veil to be seen, and incredible squalor.

Hiring a chair, I and Geronimo, who in honour of the day had donned a new suit, so tight he could not button it (this good man is fated to be a caricature), took our places amid a good deal of chaff, caused by the virulent tongue of of a dame (*mujer*), who could not settle herself to her liking, and said so, screaming at which the *miños* (street boys) assembled in force, clapped and cheered, whereon she screamed the more, relapsing at last into sulkiness and silence.

Many little episodes about me while we wait; a pale young mother, a child herself, clasping a fat baby to her breast, and kissing it again and again with transport, the dimpled little creature clinging round her neck, its fingers on her throat, at which she kissed the more; other young mothers with infants apparently just born; blind old mothers led by children; and mothers resplendent in red and yellow handkerchiefs; a grandmother seated on the ground surrounded by three generations—a big son strokes her shoulder, a pretty black-eyed lad sits with her hand in his, and daughter-in-law and daughters gather round; a *criada* crowding on everybody's skirts, and dispensing general advice in a loud voice to which no one listens; a dirty old man in a torn *capa* pressing in close to me, smoking a bad cigar; a chorus of '*una limosua por Dios*' from blind and

halt, clinking cups, but unable to circulate; aide-de-camps in uniform pressing through the crowd; water-carriers by dozens with classic jars; a brown man carrying a tray of cakes, dangerously near the open mouths of expectant boys and girls, but passing safely; a matron of better sort, who, when voices are lifted in a Babel, apologizes to me for *los pobres;* and three bold little girls perched on a street-post continually falling off on some one else's lap, and being received with curses.

I never knew a procession which kept its time. It was hot when I went down the Alhambra hill; now the red shadows of the setting sun fall on the Vela Tower in a ruddy mist. No bell tolled—it is Good Friday; but there came in the air a distant sound of music, which set the natives at my back kicking and shouting, 'They come! They come!'

First, mounted Carabineros in the robin-redbreast uniform; the country horses, not approving the press, restless and jerking, a fact not the least observed by *los pobres*, who crowd in on their heels, causing one grave official with a silver staff actually to remonstrate, a strange proceeding, as your Spaniard generally lets his brother die his own way in solemn silence.

Then a loud brass band plays a funeral march, followed by a mute in white, covered with spangled draperies, a Moorish crown or turban on his head raised upsome twelve feet, like a Jack-in-the-Green, and in his hand, concealed in the drapery, an antique silver bugle from which he blows at intervals one melancholy note—a long array of military and officials carrying tapers (every head uncovered, even to the babies); penitents in black, with hoods like a court fool without the bells, and slits for eyes; penitents in violet ditto; another wailing Jack-in-the-Green, this one in purple, his bugle tied with purple ribbons and *tulle*, and so tall that he reaches to the first floor of the houses. Another band of music—then on a huge *estrade*, twinkling with gilt candelabras, and great bouquets of mauve and white flowers, a figure of Christ crowned with thorns, on his head a sweeping growth of human hair falling in great bands—carrying a cross so heavy it bears him down—between two excutioners. All these wooden dolls or *pasos* larger than life, and after those of Seville, the best excuted in Spain.

Next to the Saviour (who created no sympathy at all among '*los pobres*,' never for a moment leaving off talking, nor the water-carriers crying '*Aqua! aqua!*' the sweatmeat man '*Dulces! dulces!*' and getting customers who duly pay him a *cuarto* before the Saviour's face), a tabernacle or sepulchre appears, followed by a long line of Roman centurions, gold helmeted and bucklered, with short swords, tunics of red velvet, and curling beards of such obvious uniformity that they suggest the same hairdresser and the same wigs. Very good centurions all the same, and fierce as to the prostrate Christ, with butcher-like gestures. After these follows a huge case like a glass coach, which the matron behind me, with a smart tap on my shoulder, informs me is 'La tumba de Christo.' Another shrouded mourner; this one in black, whose one wail at intervals on his silver bugle, lifted by an invisible hand to an invisible mouth, sounds so lugubrious that it did silence the mob for a moment, until other bands of music and fresh penitents passing—officers in full uniform, the Prefect, the Alcade, and Captain-General of Granada—restore them to cheerfulness, and reopen the floodgates of talk.

Then a 'Hush! She comes!' from the subdued voice of thousands, a violent clapping of hands and shoutings, taken up here and there like thunder on the sea, and the whole multitude (including the three bold little girls, until that moment still struggling on the summit of their post) on their knees, while a huge doll, reaching to the house-roofs, passes, diamond crowned, with a pale downcast face and deep-set steely eyes, one big white hand ablaze with rings raised in benediction—wearing a most imperial robe of crimson tissue, shot through and through with burnished auburn, and a train of velvet, worked in palm leaves and pomegranates, all in gold (calculated by its splendour to put a dozen court dowagers to shame), extending over the *estrade*, to which hang on generals and prefects, penitents and soldiers.

Clearly all the honours are for the Virgin—drawn swords and silver staves, and the whole *personnel* of the Cathedral, headed by the archbishop; the air hot with pungent incense mounting to the sky, the solemn chant of choristers, the clang of trumpets and the roll of drums, and a passionate

multitude with difficulty restrained from flinging themselves before her on the stones.

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Afterwards, when I noticed to Geronimo how ill *los pobres* had received the Saviour, he winked, and with a short laugh answered, 'Como? È muerto el Cristo, che vuole Señora? Non si fa nada por los muestos! La Viergin e viva!'

CHAPTER XXXV.

GRANADA CONTINUED.—THE GENERALIFE.

A Beautiful Scene—An Arab Garden—The Pavilion—Count Palavicini—An Illustrious Renegade—Ancestral and Royal Portraits—Cypress of the Sultana Fatima.

A STONE'S-THROW from the hotel I find myself before a modern iron gate between two white pillars; this is the entrance to the Generalife.

Now to understand it well I must explain that Generalife (*Jennatu-l'arif*) means 'Garden of the Architect,' and that the builder of the Alhambra lived here, overlooking his wondrous work, until Ismael, the Sultan, bought the place as a summer bower for his harem; that it is hung up on the side of a steep cliff turned towards the north, the cliff itself called the Silla del Sol; and that between the great fortress and the Generalife cuts that grim abyss always in shadow, called La Cuesta de los Muertos, following the line of dusky towers down to the Darro.

From the iron gate I pass into a friendly little wood, crowded with hazel and ash, the shoots swelling and rounding under a hot spring sun, the fragrant ground starred with periwinkles, blue hyacinths, and cyclamens. A scent as of a bean-field is in the air, and the level sunbeams in slanting arrows shoot through the thin foliage, disclosing the towers of the Alhambra, like a procession of ancient kings following each other in the wake of time.

There they are all ablaze, the towers, in the western sun

—Las Damas, and castellated Picos with its postern door; the Torre de las Infantas, its twin sister La Cautiva; and the aqueduct and barbican of La Aqua, round to where the Siete Suelos frowns from amongst the elms.

Oh! the ineffable beauty of this stately scene! The warm soft sun bringing forth burnished colours and glowing shades; the green underwood luminous with imprisoned light; the cheerful song of the peasant scampering down the hill, with droves of oxen and jingling bells; playing goats leaping green boundaries; the buzzing of bees intent on every flower, and the eloquence as of a charmed silence among the hills.

Then through a second gate, and I am in a lofty avenue of wind-torn cypress, the rough trunks letting in delicious peeps of the blue mountains turned towards Jaen and Palombo, the wide Vega unfolding broad surfaces in its robe of green.

A low entrance in a white-washed wall leads to Moorish chambers lined with diaper work and stucco; and with the murmur of flowing waters in my ears, I find myself in a real Arab garden, quaint and old, a marble-lined canal running through the midst, cutting banks, laden with countless flowers; gaily blossoming plants ranged on either side in painted pots at distances, and behind lofty arches of deep green yew—toning the extravagance of the tints—clipped and cut into arcades, topped with crescents, pyramids, and crowns.

On a tiny island in the centre of the canal is a *zuca*, or arbour of creepers, supported on bamboo rods—the very spot where Ismael and Yusuf sipped coffee or sherbet while the favourite slaves fluttered round to the rhythm of *zambras* and flutes—rounded arms arched high above jewelled heads, and tinkling feet flashing in and out of brocaded tissues, in steps as light as those of Psyche flying with the lamp, or Bacchantes of Lydia at the festival of the Great Mother.

The garden is shut in at the other end by a Moorish house-front of carved embroideries, opening into light ranges of pillared arcades, sweetly grouped in triplets and quartets over the abyss of the Darro thundering deep below.

Now, I take it that this garden (still haunted by beauty in the shape of a fair maiden who picks me roses as she skims along the paved walks set with coloured tiles), and that these

fantastic yews (a feature of the place), these streams and water-runnels in porcelain conduits, basins with octagonal rims, odd whimsies in hedges, a trellis topped with verdant balls, to which to hang coloured lanterns on summer nights, and green arbours domed—have all come down to us unaltered from the Moors.

They were great gardeners. Not only did they love strong-scented balsams, gums, and aromatic shrubs, the royal jasmine we call gardenia, the rose from which attar comes, and golden-ballad mimosa, lavender and thyme, but delighted in mysterious systems of irrigation (we call them *scherzi* in Italy), artistically drenching showers from concealed pipes, to catch the unwary and to cool the air.

Like the Dutch, the Moorish fancy ran into all manner of stiff patterns and devices, always on the square, the distance marked by palms, dragon-plants, bays and cochineal cactus, myrtle or box bordering the edges. When the flowers were dried up by the sun, their place was supplied by talc, glass, and coloured stones arranged in arabesques, the walks covered with a mosaic of glazed slates, bordered by low walls of encrusted tiles—blue, yellow, and black.

Have we so much improved since this? I doubt it.

The Generalife house proper—a pavilion for the sultry hours, now heavy with whitewash—would be lamentable from neglect, but for the furniture of portraits which line the walls—high personages all, looking down on you out of past ages as ancient as the place.

Now, these pictures lead me to say that this jewel of a garden belongs to Count Palavicini of Geno, Marquis of Campotejar in the Golden Book of Spain; that he also has a Moorish palace in the city, and never visits either.

The Marquis is Grimaldi, and Italian, but he is aslo Cidi Aya (Arab for Prince or Infanta), descended from a proselyte and renegade—in Christian nomenclature, Don Pedro de Granada, who lent Ferdinand his sword against his countrymen during the siege of Granada, and was with him and Isabel at Santa Fé.

It happened at the conquest of Baza; El Zagal, the fiery old rebel, sitting in the Castle of Guadix, can send no help to his kinsman, Cidi Aya. In vain Zagal asks, 'How goes it with him at Baza?' No one can answer,

until a travel-stained African appears, who has braved a thousand deaths on the road, and delivers into his hand a scroll with those words: 'Baza is doomed, O Emir! Shed no more blood to save it.' Signed, 'Cidi Aya.'

Had such a missive come from any other but his own kinsman, El Zagal would assuredly have cut off the African's nose. Now he only hangs his head, and cries, 'God is great. It is not in man to murmur. Return, my son'—to the messenger,—'and tell the noble chief to make what terms he can. *I* cannot aid him.'

So Cidi immediately capitulates, coming himself to the Christian camp to bring the hostages, where the sight of Queen Isabel was too much for him. Touched by the flame of love, his heart burns like a cinder. Can he do less than implore the gracious Queen to enrol him among her knights? To watch over her with his enamoured eyes? Defend her with his sword?

To do all this Cidi must become a Christian!

What of that? To a man so much in love a change of faith is a pleasure. So he is baptised, and as a reward, the astute Ferdinand loads him with riches and honours.

There is his portrait, and also that of a black-faced Judas, his son, called Alonzo, in full armour, crushing the decapitated head of an African countryman—evidently a red-hot pervert—and alongside many more Mussulman-looking Christians, docketed 'Kings of Granada and Saragossa'—very comely personages of the Velasquez cut, the African blood in each generation less and less visible.

The genealogical tree of the 'Cidi Grimaldi' hangs at the end of the hall, showing eighteen tributary kings who reigned in Granada.

There are royal portraits of Ferdinand and Isabella—Isabella, a plump blonde; Philip II., a pale-faced child; Charles V., a young man, much resembling Titian's portrait of his son; Don John of Austria, with a truncheon of command; the great Captain Gonzalo; and last, though not least, a most curious likeness of Boabdil el Chico (that he was 'little,' is proved by his armour at Madrid), in a yellow *juste-à-corps*, trimmed with fur, and a *majo* hat—crowned.

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And all this time I am forgetting the heroine of the place—beautiful Fatima (Isabel de Solis) la Cautiva—now wife of old Muley—in her garden (a second square, reached from the house by flights of marble steps), all water—torrents rushing madly out of subterranean depths furnishing fishponds; water trickling in rills and painted troughs; fairy-like jets, and miniature cascades, all under a shady avenue of old cypresses of wondrous girth—the oldest topped of its leafy crown by cruel storms—the identical tree (dare you doubt it?) under which the 'Light of Dawn'—as Fatima was called—was caught in dalliance with a handsome Abencerrage Guardsman, insolently crowned with a rose garland!

So said three 'honourable persons' of the Zegri tribe, enemies to the Abencerrage.

To which accusation Fatima answered, 'No; never!' Nor would she allow that she was answerable for the rivers of blood which flowed afterwards in the 'Court of Lions.'

'Nothing but the old jealousy between Zegris and Abencerrage,' she asserted, with which she could not meddle. Did not the dying Zegri confess the fraud under torture to Muley—*did he not?*'

'It was really too bad to accuse her,' Fatima said. 'Allah be witness!' and she added, 'that if Muley Hassan wanted more information, he had better go down and ask the Enchanter, shut up under the Silla del Moro, behind the Generalife, in a cave, hid by a great stone. The Enchanter would know, for he keeps watch over the defunct kings of Granada, armed with a spear. (He has Boabdil in his care to this day, under the guard of a bronze horseman, with his face turned towards the hill.) 'If the Enchanter knows nothing,' said Fatima, 'it is clear there is nothing more to know.'

Terrible lying this, from a Christian, and the last Queen of the Alhambra! (I picture Fatima, small, with eyebrows blackened with *kohl*, and vermilion-painted lips, pearly ears and a cool skin; a red-jewelled jacket hanging loose about her waist; drawers of silver tissue around her lissome limbs and golden-slippered feet—with a languor about her, a passion of half-closed eyes, and snake-like movements, firing as it were her very draperies with flame.)

Nevertheless, old Muley was obstinate. Unless the 'Light of Dawn' produced four knights to defend her cause, within three days she would be burnt alive. Of course the knights arrived in due time and vanquished, and of course after that Fatima had it all her own way, carrying on with Guardsmen, Moslem and Christian, and leading Muley Hassan such a life, that, beautiful as she was, he cursed the hour that she had crossed his path!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

GRANADA CONTINUED.—A BULL-FIGHT.

The Stage and the Arena—Vico—An Imperious Artist—Spanish Actors and Dramatists—Opera—The National Sport—Love for Bulls inherent in Spaniards—El Pueblo—The Arena—The Matadores—The Bull—Poor Horses!—The Picadores—Death of the Bull—A Dastardly Sport.

FOR Easter week we are to have a bull-fight, and Señor Vico at the theatre.

By an easy process of extolling everything native to the skies, Vico is esteemed by his countrymen the Salvini of Spain; but in reality he is not worthy to compare with that great tragedian. Still, with a tremendous pair of coal-black eyes, a fine natural pallor and a dignified presence, Vico is effective. His arrival at Granada is inaugurated by a letter from King Alfonso, addressed to the Governor and the Captain-General of the Province, both dignities of the highest rank.

The Governor, a tall comely gentleman, the very quintessence of courtly suavity, received the actor with the respect talent always commands in Spain, but even *he* is a little startled by the conversation which ensues.

'You see,' says Señor Vico, bending his tragic orbs upon him, 'from these letters, in what high esteem his Majesty holds me?'

The Governor bows, and opines that 'In this, as in all else, his Majesty's judgment is perfect.'

Then comes a pause and a slight hesitation on the actor's part.

'I understand,' he continues, 'that your Excellency receives once a-week—a *tertulia*, with dancing?'

Again the Governor acknowledges the soft impeachment with a bow.

'Well, your Excellency, you will understand, now that I am come to Granada, this must cease. During the time of my twenty-five representations any reception is impossible; it would diminish my audience, and impair my receipts by drawing away naturally the best society; your Excellency understands?'

'But,' objects the courteous Governor, looking much amazed, 'I cannot shut my door against those friends who honour me with their presence.'

'All the same, you will have to do it,' is Vico's brusque answer. 'What! an artist such as I!' he continues, pale with excitement, 'who has filled Spain with the lustre of his name, comes to an obscure town like Granada, with letters from the King, and *you*, his representative, open your house on the nights of his performance?'

Here Señor Vico paused and shook with real or feigned emotion.

'You are silent, Señor Gobernador? The Captain-general, upon whom I have just called, and who, like you, opens his house once a-week, was silent also. But let me tell your Excellency, if you persist in these *tertulias*, you will receive orders from the King (I told the Captain-general the same) forbidding you, as his servants, to interfere with *me*.'

After which, in a transport of tragic fury, Vico takes his leave.

Needless to say that the King did *not* interfere, and that the *tertulias* at the Governor's and the Captain-general's were none the less merry.

Speaking of Vico brings me to the Spanish stage. I do not think much of it. The acting is facile, and presents a certain dramatic aptitude, but the Spaniards are essentially a dancing and riding, not a theatrical, people.

Out of Madrid (which as a capital full of foreign artists I do not count) excellency is rarely attained, and the audience is satisfied.

The same easy-going indifference proper to the people, shows itself in the mimic world; actors just run through the parts assigned to them decently, with the least possible amount of trouble to themselves and the audience, that is all.

From the actors my remarks follow on to the dramatists. You cannot call them good, nor can you altogether stigmatise them as bad. Spanish vanity naturally prefers Spanish authors; and there are many: Echegaray, once minister of Fomento, author of 'El gran Galeoto,' the best liked of all his plays; Lopez de Ayala, also once a minister and esteemed 'an illustrious poet'—his drama of 'Consuelo' greatly applauded; and Garcia Gutierrez, and Zorrilla.

These Catholic play-wrights certainly do not *gêné* themselves in religious matters. They actually bring crucifixes on the stage, and introduce portable shrines with lighted tapers, and images of the Virgin!

As to the *Zarzuela* (opera comique) it is the same thing; music generally imported, becomes, by an easy process, Spanish at the frontier. I was informed the other night, that '*La prova di un opera seria*,' called here '*Campanone*,' was Spanish, and (O shade of Rossini!) that the 'Barber of Seville' was Spanish music *arranged by an Italian!* And (*en parenthèse*) what a treat to listen to these thrilling Italian notes, and that true voice of melody in which they speak, after the inanities to which I have been accustomed by national composers, ignorant of what true music means.

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I delight in the Spaniards, generally, as a nation, but I abhor them at a bull-fight! Yet no one else seems of my opinion. Pepe Illo, the Torero, expressing the universal sentiment, says, 'The love of bulls is inherent in the Iberian race, and the Spaniards are as much braver and stronger than other men, just as their bulls are more valiant and savage.'

I make these remarks anent a great *funcion* which took place here yesterday; four famous matadors from Madrid, eight bulls, a multitude of horses—the day, Easter Sunday,

splendid, but for an icy wind blowing from the Sierra—and the whole of Granada, including troops of English (there are about sixty in each of the hotels), in motion—so much in motion, indeed, that a Rev. Mr Harper, entreated by divers pious English ladies to read prayers at the Siete Suelos, assembled his congregation at 9 A.M. in order, as he said, to lunch comfortably and go to the bull-fight.

As for me I had my scruples, but as a traveller I determined to overcome them and to go.

'How can you,' I once asked one of the humanest and kindliest of Spanish gentlemen, 'sit and see animals so tortured?'

Says he to me, 'In cold blood I would not harm a fly, but at a bull-fight I become so excited I forget everything.'

At one o'clock I walked down into the Carrera de Genil opposite the snowy mountains, sparkling like banks of diamonds in the sun, and found every omnibus in Granada let out into seats to convey the world to and fro to the Plaza del Triunfo, in which stands the bull-ring.

Seeing my chance at an open door I jumped in, followed by my faithful Geronimo, and drove off at a desperate pace along something which calls itself a road, but is more like a dried-up water-torrent.

'In for a penny, in for a pound,' say I to myself, as we tilt over heaps of upturned stones nobody will ever use to mend the road, and through pools of filthy water.

Opposite to me sat a glowing belle in a white lace mantilla, in her hair three large roses—red, pink and yellow, together with various other floral decorations about her person. Other ladies are more or less gorgeous—but, alas! we are not in Andalusia, and the beneficent powers who have created this mountain paradise have cursed it with a hideous population.

As to the crowd, dust, bell-ringing, horse-galloping, carriage-bumping and screaming, if you have not been in Spain, it is vain to describe it. When '*el pueblo*' come out '*au naturel*' they are very rough and brutal, and care no more for human life than for snuffing out a candle.

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With a dash and a bound, just escaping a jam against

six other omnibuses all rushing in promiscuously at the same moment, we are set down at the entrance.

As the street Arabs are numerous, and Granada a nest of pickpockets, I hang on to Geronimo, again arrayed in his rhubarb-coloured suit (his supposed best), quite alive to the occasion, and with the help of those excellent robin-red-breasts, the Guardias Civiles, pass inside the barrier, without losing purse or limb.

Once entered and holding up your ticket in your hand (I gave eleven francs for mine; the boxes at the top—which no one took—are sixty and seventy francs), I am bound to confess nothing can be more gravely decorous. Officials in uniform take your ticket and place you in your number in the usual deliberate way, then solemnly contemplate you all round, as if you were strange goods and contraband. I look down over a vast arena with room for 15,000 persons, the sun glittering in on one side, a cold shadow spreading over the other, and a biting north wind rushing in at every corner. There is a sprinkling of mantillas and Andalusian hats, and an audience as rowdy and restless as Oxford gownsmen at a commemoration. A red-faced Englishman in a sealskin cap had a great success, and was forced to stand up and acknowledge it, or there would have been a row, and a pretty little girl from Seville, with violet eyes, narrowly escaped being called out by the multitude. An hour past amid howling, cat-calls, hand-clapping, roars of laughter, signs of recognition from side to side, whistling, and orange-throwing from the benches to the arena, where men with basketfuls circulate—a bad band played worse waltzes; then renewed screechings, fluttering, talking, orange-throwing, and groans, until at 2.30 the idlers were all swept out of the arena by the Alguazils, and the great gates at the end thrown open.

Then enter two solemn-looking officials like undertakers in ancient cut clothes, 'riding high and disposing;' the picadores with long white lances (very odd stiff figures, seeing that their clothes are lined with iron), mounted on doleful, blindfolded horses, which, all unconscious of their fate, are making the feeblest efforts to rear and show mettle. Then follow the four matadors, announced in the bills, each accompanied by his *chulos*—magnificent giants, bronzed

and hard-featured, with faces like steel masks, their costume green, crimson, lilac and pink satin, one mass of embroidery and buttons; knee-breeches and silk stockings, with the most amazing clocks; black *monteras* covered with bobbing fringe, and plaited hair behind like a lady's chignon.

The dainty attitude of these men picking their way on the sawdust, their white handkerchiefs hanging out of little, gold-worked pockets, the pinkness of their legs and the sparkling buckles on their shoes, make them all the more repulsive. One must, I suppose, accept them as degenerate gladiators; but the Romans fought naked with the arms of nature, and these are but miserable coxcombs with every available defence.

Nevertheless they pleased, especially Frascuelo, who is said to enjoy amazing female patronage at Madrid, and to be *au mieux* with several ladies!

All the world stood up and clapped as they advanced beneath the central box to salute the urbane Governor, who for some unknown reason took no notice of them, but went on talking to those about him, leaving them vainly bowing on the floor.

The picadores on their miserable screws, range themselves against the wooden barriers running all round, and the matadors take their place in the centre, blazing in the sun like transcendent butterflies—each condescending to accept an ample cloak from his *chulos* of the same colour as his dress, which he drapes gracefully about him like a toga. For some minutes silence, then the bull!

Yes! poor beast, as quiet as a cow—a dirty-flanked, white, thin bull, with a pathetic look about him as if coming from green pastures, moist mud, and overhanging branches—piteous to behold. Such a tame, harmless creature, and so gentle it made one's heart bleed! I shall never forget his scared, bewildered eye; it was perfectly human!

I sat by a pretty little Spanish lady, to whom I offered all possible civilities, because I knew that as matters proceeded nothing would prevent my seizing hold of her in the paroxysm of the moment.

'Do you like it?' I asked her.

'Si mucho,' squaring herself together. 'Me gusta! Si!'

'Es horrible,' said I, 'barbarous.'

'Nada,' laughed she, with eyes revelling on the bloody game going on below of rousing the poor dumb bull into fury, transfixing his neck with darts concealed in coloured paper sometimes three at a time; red cloaks dancing before his puzzled eyes; he leaping, vaulting, rushing, then the sudden anguish arresting him mid-way.

Poor brute! with a deep wreath of gore round his neck he gave one woeful look round as who might say, 'I am nothing but a poor country bull, come up from the marshes to amuse you. Will no one take pity on me?'

None!

There are plenty of splendid gentlemen around in glaring cloaks, to whom it would do good to lose a little of the blood the bull is shedding—streams every instant, his gory collar now reaching half down his body. He will soon be weak enough for the matadors to attack. Of course the tortured animal runs snorting upon the horses and embowels them, and they lie on the ground writhing, unless capable of being raised and plugged up again with tow, to take their tottering places, and go through a fresh round.

Why the horses are there at all is a mystery to me. They do no good. (The Portuguese have their bull-fights without them, and the bulls are tipped with metal, and the bull is not killed.) Surely the agony of a horse cannot be deemed cheerful? To see an animal so serviceable to man in the throes of death, agreeable? Yet they are there for no other purpose. Nor will the *oi polloi* permit any economy in the matter. (One day they tell me a bull killed so many horses the contractor rushed out and bought up a whole cab-stand.) There they lie on the ground quivering, and when a bull has nothing else to do he gores them.

A dull or sulky bull is more dangerous than a savage one. He shuts his eyes and runs at anything, or skulks and dashes in at unexpected moments. His last resource is to leap the barrier. Then he has his enemies on the hip, and can destroy human life wholesale.

All this time I am looking for the 'excitement;' I find none. It was a dreary, bloody butchery, not only with the first bull but with a second one, which I forced myself to see.

Like everything the Spaniards do, except talking, there are long pauses. The matadors hang back, chat and smoke

cigarettes; the bull wanders vaguely about, goring a dead horse or two, then plaintively gazing round for a mercy he does not find. The band plays more bad waltzes, the picadores exchange more compliments with the benches, and the orange-sellers again emerge.

Long pauses with the scent of blood in the air, and pools of it on the sanded arena, beside the dead horses, six in a row dead or dying. Nor am I at all impressed with the valour of the splendid gentlemen in the bespangled clothes and silk stockings, who manage to keep themselves as intact as a lady at a ball, protected by their large, heavy cloaks, sufficient at any moment, skilfully thrown, to baffle a bull. The instant the animal charges, even before he has time to do so, they leap over the barrier like acrobats (these flying leaps are masterpieces). Yet they were all famous 'artists' well known among the fancy, and engaged at great sums (many of them are rich men and drive down to the *corrida* with their wives in their own carriages).

The only possible danger is if a matador or banderillero should slip, but as there were eight of them, not to speak of numberless showy assistants, some one is almost sure to come up in time.

I was really wicked enough to wish that their fine clothes were torn, as well as some of their blood shed also.

The longer the bull is baited the weaker he becomes. The daggers planted jauntily in his neck take care of that. Soon his eyes grow dim, his tongue hangs out, and a thick, bloody foam gathers at his lips.

More and more he requires to be aggravated. Inexorable fate looms before him; he must die.

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The death of the bull is not shocking like the horses. A trumpet sounds, and in a graceful attitude a matador stands forth, in his right hand a heavy sword, in his left a crimson cloth. Bowing to the Governor, he throws up his Figaro cap, passes a joke or two around, then turns to the bull.

For an instant each studies the other, the man and the brute; then waving the red cloth the two-legged animal poises his sword, the bull rushes in, head down, and the bright blade enters to the hilt between the spine and the shoulders.

The bull totters, still gallantly facing his enemy, his hot breath comes fast, he sinks on his knees, from that upon his side, his proud head held up to the last, his eyes fixed upon his foe until a *coup de grâce* finishes him. Such is a modern bull-fight—a vulgar parade of man's power against brute endurance, the animal blooded to weakness without defence, the man full of strength with all possible defences, and determined to preserve not only his skin, but his limbs, his dainty clothes and resplendent stockings.

I call it dastardly; I never went again!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

GRANADA CONTINUED.—TWO ALAMEDAS.

By the Daro—The Last Days of the Moors—A Child's Funeral—Alameda de Ginil—Chapel of San Sebastian—Meeting of Boabdil and Ferdinand—Granada Surrenders!—Interior of Chapel—Ultimo Suspiro del Moro.

THERE are two Alamedas at Granada, beside the two rivers which race each other through the streets. I go first to the Darro, which divides the oldest portion of the city—the Albaicin, as it is called, once a fortress-crowned hill—from the wooded heights of the Alhambra. Here, while the sun is hot, I take my seat upon a marble bench under a row of ancient planes, my ears soothed by the voice of the 'loud-mouthed' river, the rumble of water-mills, the twittering of birds, and the wild chant of the gitanos on the opposite bank.

In front a little bridge leads to the steep path of the Cuesta de la Muerte, and above, high overhead the stern cincture of the Alhambra stretches along the edge.

Sitting in the shade, the faithful Geronimo by my side (even his dull soul rises to the splendour of the scene, and his lack-lustre eyes and that chinless profile of his are unceasingly raised towards the great castle. He knows, too,

'the names of all the towers, and the mystery of the Vela bell, which sounds every fifteen minutes through the night like a musical Sereno), I fall to thinking how for ten years the Moors struggled with incredible gallantry against the Christian host. Town after town taken, castle, fortress and tower; brethren slain or captured; the Vega (to them a providence and a delight) yielded up—every wall, cliff, or turret, from which an arrow could be hurled, disputed—a whole nation thronging at their gates, yet still exhausted and dying, hanging on to, embracing as it were, their beloved soil, from which neither defeat nor death can part them.

Then came the fatal day when Granada must fall. The hosts of Ferdinand and Isabella gird it round; the tramp of the Christian soldiers echoes in their homes, and those great leaders, Ponce de Leon, Villena, Tendilla, and the two Aguilars, Gonzalo and Alonso, reckon the hours until they pass the walls.

No more dashing sallies under the dark eyes of *las damas* on the walls. No more crescent-banners waving over ranks of broad scimitars; banquets to the victors in the pavilioned Court of Lions, and turbaned phalanges marching in laden with spoil!

The fiat has gone forth to a people callous with despair, amid famine-stricken streets, dismantled barbicans, and ruined towers—the proud African bowed to the earth—hunger in every eye, the horror of slavery in every heart!

Then Boabdil called a council in the Hall of Justice—emirs and viziers, knights and alcades, alfaques, doctors of the law, and sage councillors, and asked them, what was to be done.

At this momentous question every face grew pale, and they who had resisted so manfully hung their heads and wept.

For a time no one answered, until an aged alcade rose, and with a faltering voice uttered the word, 'Surrender!' At which all with one voice joined in.

'Surrender! Alas! we have no food—none can reach us! We are 200,000, young and old, and all starving! Of what avail are defences? The Christian is at hand! Allah has willed it!'

'Surrender!' The word passes from mouth to mouth, from hard-visaged councillors sitting round on ancient seats, ashes sprinkled on their heads, to swarthy warriors grizzled with toil, and silken, effeminate courtiers, up to those inlaid domes of mother-of-pearl and crystal; the embroideries and arabesques on the fantastic walls echo it; the fairy-like arches carry it from the furthermost patio, to the women's quarter beyond the Court of Alberca, where wails and and shrieks repeat it.

Meanwhile, Boabdil scans each face, but speaks not. Then the fierce Musa, the most valiant of all the Moorish knights (and they are many), starts to his feet.

'Surrender!' he cries, in a voice like a clarion. 'Who says that word is a traitor! Surrender to whom? To the Christian king? He is a liar. Death is the least evil we have to fear from him! To surrender means plunder and sacking, the profanation of our mosques, the ruin of our homes, the violation of our women; whips, chains, dungeons, the faggot and the stake. This is surrender! Let him that has a man's heart follow me to the Christian camp. There let us die!'

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Alas! that was a night of mourning and wailing as the sun went down over the Alhambra, in clouds as of blood. Within those walls, where they had been born and lived, there they would linger! Among those enchanting courts, beside gushing fountains, dark orange-groves, and those painted halls, the very picture-books of history and legend.

Now all was to be abandoned—the royal treasures packed, the inlaid walls stripped of their hangings; the gold vessels set with pearls, the jewelled cups and carved platters for perfumed water; the royal robes and garments woven in Persian looms.

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At break of day the household of Boabdil departed into a cold world—the stately Sultana la Horra and the large-eyed Queen followed by all the pomp of an Eastern court, guards, slaves, mutes and eunuchs passing out of the walls—the conquered city sleeping at their feet, while, by the Gate of Justice, on the other side, rode in a gallant company of Christian knights, Arragonese horsemen with rounded

casques, nobles in armour, gold tabarded trumpeters, men-at-arms, and arquebusers, with hedges of lances and bucklers —led by the Primate of Spain, bearing in his hand the silver cross to be planted on the tower of the Vega.

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While I mused, a hushed sound of children's voices comes to me from the town, and presently four boys appear, bare-headed, out of the trees, carrying between them a wooden box, followed by two men who smoke and laugh. Within the box lay a dead infant, its little face already blue and pinched. Upon its forehead was bound a tinsel fillet, and the small body, not half filling the box, was strewn with paper flowers and fresh herbs. The weight must have been slight, for the four bareheaded boys bearing the tressels (of cotton), jolted the little corpse unmercifully, turning the livid face from side to side, into a kind of rigid vitality—unwittingly, I am sure, for there was pity and love in their faces, and every now and then they stop and right the little body, and smooth the flowers and herbs.

They pass along the Alameda, over the little bridge, and up the steep path of the Cuesta de los Muertos, the men loitering behind. I watch them to the top of the hill, where the Sierra Nevada shines out in all the glory of eternal snow. Then I, too, follow up to the bleak cemetery above, where a snuffy priest in soiled robes receives them, a book in one hand, an asperge in the other; a brown-faced acolyte behind, hastily thrusting his arms into a white alb, too small for him, and dirty.

The grave-digger also is there, shovelling earth into other open graves—for it is the hour of burial, and much work to do.

The little box is not to be alone. It is placed on the edge of a deep grave, where layer upon layer of larger boxes are ranged—open, but with earth shaken over the forms—while the priest mumbles Latin out of his book, pausing to take snuff, and the two men who have lingered behind come up, still smoking, and rather inclined to laugh.

When the larger corpses are disposed of, the poor little box is huddled in (it is so small and light lying at the top), and the grave-digger sprinkles earth upon the pale baby-face,

too, at which one of the four boys begins to cry, and the others look very sad.

This done the priest pockets his book and hurries off, his hands full of snuff. Then spadefuls of red earth come falling in with heavy thuds (he knows that earth, that grave-digger, he has turned it over so many years the very worms recognise him and wriggle out of sight), and the small fair head vanishes from view, at which the four boys take comfort.

Seeing all is over and the little one laid at rest, what more is there to do? The tenderness of a boy can go no further —it is not to be expected—so with a finger in his mouth the one leaves of crying, and the others, after staring into the grave, gradually form themselves into a little group about the acolyte in his dirty alb; and no more coffins appearing coming up the hill, they all settle themselves down to a game of marbles upon the damp slab of a grave.

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A very different complexioned place is the Alameda del Genil. Although both rivers rise from the snows of the Sierra Nevada, their character is totally different; a very Cain and Abel among rivers, always fighting. Only after a long struggle it is the peaceful one which wins, and swallows up his turbulent elder in the dark caves under the tower.

When they emerge on this Alameda they are one. The roaring Darro and the gentle Genil destined to fertilise the Vega, only enough of the errant disposition of the 'Cain' stream remains as occasionally to urge forward his younger in a mad raid over stocks and stones, overturning barriers and uprooting trees. The Genil Alameda opens from the town in a broad and leafy boulevard, through which the local rank and fashion drive in very *so-so* equipages.

And how gay and piquant it is down here! How soothing the murmur of the green-tinged river! How soft the warm wind among the elms!—the distant sound of wheels conveying a sense of plenty in this hungry land—the broad straight walks and balustraded terraces, where children gambol and old men bask—the shrill cry of happy schoolboys eager at their games—the low mutterings of tranquil talk under dear old-fashioned bowers and trim parterres, tasselled with guelder roses, laburnums and lilac.

(I specially love the old strain of roses I see here, coéval, I take it, with the time of Fatima, just the odorous sort of flowers she would have plucked to make that 'insolent' garland for her Abencerrage lover)—all shut in by the infinite whiteness of the Sierra, a smooth, pure world lost in a hazy heaven!

Traveller, do not be tempted to visit Granada too soon. Remember it is a mountain eyrie under eternal snows; the end of April is the very earliest, better still the month of May.

My only fault with the Sierra Nevada is that I can so seldom see it. When I do, I declare not even the Jungfrau at Interlachen is more marvellous.

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At the end of the Alameda a bridge spans the river, over which roll carts and coaches into dirty country roads.

Myself and Mrs B—, my most congenial companion at Granada (unhappily as great a coward as I am), set forth yesterday, trembling, in an omnibus, the *fiacre* of Granada—nothing to be had but a large omnibus—for the chapel of Saint Sebastian. We could not walk, the excessive rains had so ploughed up the roads, never anything to boast of. But reassured by the tranquil conduct of the horses and the deliberate movements of the driver, we speedily left off hanging on to each other in abject terror, and were enabled to look about and use our eyes, in ten minutes finding ourselves at a low white-washed building beside the road. A drove of mild-eyed oxen are munching their meal of straw under a hedge, the drivers resting beside them on a low wall discussing the contents of their wallets, with occasional draughts of wine out of pigskins. A diligence, bound to Motril, passes; a mule carrying two men and a heavy load, and several strings of donkeys.

Yet, homely as all this looks, there is no place in the whole range of Spanish history more sacred than this spot.

It is the 2d of November 1492—Ferdinand and Isabel have entrenched themselves at Santa Fé, and the siege of Granada has lasted as long as that of Troy—when Boabdil, mounted on a powerful war-horse, rides slowly forth from the Alhambra by the Gate of the Siete Suelos, and descends the hill by a winding path, called from henceforth the Cuesta

de los Martires, crosses the bridge of the Genil, and draws up before this building, then a mosque. (We know his very dress: a dark mantle thrown over an Eastern tunic, a regal crown attached to his turban, and in his hand two keys. He is thus represented on a curious stone carving in the Capilla Real at the cathedral.)

At the entrance of the little mosque the Catholic sovereigns await him. They are also on horseback; Isabel mounted on a white jennet richly caparisoned, her auburn hair confined by a jewelled coif, forming a regal coronet, her beautiful face radiant, her queenly form erect. Ferdinand is beside her, with a sparkle in his eye the rigidest canons of Spanish reserve cannot master, so triumphant does he feel. Behind them rides their young daughter, Katherine of Arragon, to become the wife of Henry VIII., and beside her her gallant brother, young Don Juan, Ferdinand's only son, lately knighted by his father on the battlefield (alas! too soon to become but an effigy upon a tomb)—a brilliant group—surrounded by a staff of valiant knights, whose prowess has made their names immortal in the siege of Granada to all time; the stalwart Marquis of Cadiz, browned by the sun of battles; the faultless features of that king of men, the great Captain Gonzalo de Cordova; Guzman El Bueno, the heroic Duke of Medina Sidonia, who spared not his son, his only son, for his country's need, but from the walls of Tarifa, with his own hand, flung down the dagger to smite his heart; the Marquis de Villena; Counts Ureña and Tendilla, the last well-beloved of astute Ferdinand—statesman as well as warrior; Alonzo Fernandez. Cifuentes, Cabra, Montemayor, and conspicuous in this noble company the dusky-faced renegade, Cidi Aya, in a dark suit of armour, carrying the *bâton* of command as Don Pedro, Captain-General of Granada. Behind press in the 300 Christian captives, released at the signing of the peace; bishops, monks, and statesmen, veterans grown grey in war, Asturian arquebusiers, Arragonese sharpshooters—lances, banners, battle-axes, croziers, crosses, and blood-stained trophies, backed by the red walls of the Alhambra.

Hurridly dismounting from his horse, the unhappy Boabdil would have knelt and kissed Ferdinand's hand; but he generously forbade it. Then the poor humbled

monarch offers the same homage to Isabel, who also gracefully declines—a wan smile breaking over his haggard face, for in her hand she holds that of his little son, detained at Santa Fé as a hostage, whom he seizes on and embraces.

And now the moment is come that he must deliver up the ensignia of royalty, and with that natural dignity which so rarely forsakes an Oriental, Boabdil tenders the keys of the Alhambra. 'Take them,' he says, in a low voice. 'You have conquered. Thus, O King and Queen, receive our kingdom and our person! Allah is great! Use us with the clemency you have promised towards the Moors. Be merciful as you are strong!' At these words, uttered as by a dying man, Isabel's great heart melts, and her eyes fill with tears. Not so the astute Ferdinand. With difficulty he can suppress his joy—he knew too well the part he meant to play with Boabdil and his kingdom, and his appealing words grate on his ear—but suppressing these feelings,—'Doubt not, O Boabdil!' is his reply, 'the sanctity of our promise, nor that by a timely submission you shall suffer. I give you our royal word that our Moslem subjects shall find equal justice with our own.' Then Ferdinand hands the keys to the Queen, who passes them on to her son, Prince Juan, who, in his turn, gives them to the Conde de Tendilla, the new alcade of the Alhambra.

Then, in breathless silence, the glittering group await the signal which is to make Granada theirs—Isabel, her hands clasped, in silent prayer, Ferdinand casting up anxious glances to the fortress-crowned hill, where anon in the clear morning light the silver cross, borne by the Bishop of Avila, is seen to blaze out from the citadel of the Alhambra, the striped red and yellow flag of Spain fluttering over it—at which one great shout of triumph rises up to the skies, trumpets sound, artillery booms, cries of 'Santiago! Santiago!' rend the air, and the pious Queen hastily dismounting, enters the little chapel beside the road—a mosque that morning converted into a church—to celebrate a solemn Te Deum to the warlike music of drum, fife, and joy bells.

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Such is the chapel of St Sebastian we have come to see—the Arab walls of the mosque untouched, the altar under a Saracenic arch rudely standing; an encrusted dome over-

head, edged with a curious Eastern border—the whole a little circular edifice of fit proportions, with honeycombed niches at the sides.

An old dame keeps the key, and displays an image of San Sebastian (she knows nothing of Moslems); but she has the discretion to point out to us an inscription on the outer wall, setting forth in quaint old Spanish letters, that on this spot Boabdil met the Catholic sovereigns, and delivered up to them the keys of Granada, who, in memory of their gratitude to God for overcoming the Moors, converted this mosque into a Christian church in honour of San Sebastian.'

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BURGOS.

Spanish Houses—Aspect of the Town—The Cathedral and the Cid—The Suelos—A Terrible Hero—Bones of the Cid—Legend of the Chest—Church of Santa Agueda—The Cid and Alphonso VI.—The Cathedral disappointing—The Chapels—The Condestable—The Exterior—A Plague of Boys—Cartuja de Miraflores—Las Huelgas—The Abbess and Her Nuns—Statue of Santiago and other Relics—A Note for Travellers.

HERE I am at the old city of Burgos, far from snow-belted Granada and the chivalric Moor—among the dull platitudes of the northern plains, the centre of the Gothic monarchy in Spain, which, when the Saracens swept northwards beyond the Asturias and the Pyrenees, held all that was sacred in the old Iberian land—the capital of the Sanchez, Ramiros, Ordoños and Alonzos, Kings of Leon, Asturias and Navarre, now a dilapidated and silent little place without trade or commerce of any kind, yet with a well-washed, painted air about it, quite Dutch-like in neatness, as it lies straggling by the river-side.

Never can the aspect of a Spanish town be said to be dull, however lonely; the houses in the south are all white, and in the north, tinted upon the principle of Joseph's coat

of many colours, pink, blue, peach, gold or yellow, each one totally dissimilar to his neighbour in height and shape, and sprouting out all over into balconies, *miradors*, and low arcades under the flat roofs—an unexpected Gothic tower perhaps, or a barbican, built in quite promiscuous, with an utter contempt of unity and proportion positively diverting.

Winding along the banks of the dried-up river Arlanzon, Burgos stands prettily to the rail amid broad boulevards of aspen and poplar, backed by the level lines of bare green hills.

Apart, neither city nor landscape are lovely; poplars for miles and miles, mere sticks—and modern public gardens with raw-looking statues and marble seats. Still, taken as a whole, cheerful and pleasant, thronged with staring *caballeros* in ample cloaks and *capas*, and peasants stepping with a lofty stride; every one muffled up to the eyes in the Castilian dread of fresh air, though the weather is perfect, and crowding round *cafés* and eating-houses, listening to a band.

I could not have thought that dull Burgos held so many souls. How they live, God knows, for there is no commerce or apparent employment for anyone.

From the moment you pass the grand old Gothic gateway of Santa Maria beside the bridge, covered with castellated bartizans and statues of Burgalese notables, in flat square niches, into the town, two things absorb you, the Cathedral and the Cid.

There is no getting away from either.

As to the Cid, 'the child of Burgos,' he is everywhere; nothing short of an earthquake could wash him out.

As a lad, auburn-skinned, with rippling hair, bold forehead and audacious eyes, who, when bidden by his father, Don Sanchez, to kiss the 'good King's' hand, answered 'No; and if you do' (to his father), 'I am heartily ashamed of you,' after which rebellious sentiment he vaults into his saddle and rides away.

As a young man, when haughty Don Diego, strutting about the streets of Burgos, in his *majo* cap and plume, lace boots and ample mantle, arrogantly hit Don Sanchez, his father, that historic blow, for which the Cid took such ample vengeance by running him through the body down

by the river, spite of his ardent love for his fair daughter, Ximena. Vainly she flung her white arms aloft, and called on the King for justice and his death, then with charming feminine inconsistency faints when her chosen champion (to whom her hand is promised if he overcomes the Cid) appears, a bloody sword in his hand, and she thinks that he is slain.

As a bridegroom, having overcome Ximena's scruples after all this woe, and she is led to the altar by the King and Queen of Arragon, under arches of foliage, wheat-ears scattered at her feet, and olive-branches and rushes laid on the ground, through lanes of glittering spears and lances. Bulls following with damask trappings, a fool with cap and bells, and crowds of captive maidens dancing to lute and cyther; 'the King always talking,' as the old ballads says, 'but Ximena held down her head.' ''Tis better to be silent than meaningless,' she said.

As a husband, in the Suelos or floor of his ancestral home, standing on the brow of the hill over Burgos, near a mediæval gateway—on which you still see a stone bearing the measure of his arm—living here with Ximena many happy years, and going in and out to frays, sieges and battles; she bearing him three children, until his arrogance getting him out of favour at Court, he undertook the capture of Valencia on his own account.

Alas! nothing of the Cid's priceless old house remains, except the stone flooring and three carved shields which ornamented the front, now raised upon pedestals to mark the spot. Having visited the Suelos, or what remains of it, I have still to examine the Cid's bones, his tomb, his chest, and the church of Santa Agueda.

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On foot as usual, and the prey of boys, I selected one who, with admirable tact, kicked off his comrades and instinctively conveyed me to the Ayuntamiento to see the bones.

Poor Cid, having been carried on the back of Bavieca from Valencia to Burgos, as I have said, he was buried at San Pedro de Cardeña, five miles off among the hills. The mutilated monument still remains under an arch, the Cid's tall figure in a suit of mail, his right hand grasping his

double-hilted sword 'Tizona,' the faithful Ximena lying by his side.

Legend says that the corpse, left alone in the church before being interred, was visited by a Jew, who contemptuously contemplating the face of the dead hero and his sacred beard, of which the Cid had said, 'Thanks be to God, it is long, because I keep it for my pleasure, and never a son of Moor or Jew has dared to touch it,' and recalling all the cruelties of which he had been guilty towards his race, thus apostrophised the corpse: 'Yes, you are the great Cid, low enough now; and that is your fine black beard, grey and thin now, of which you were so proud. I should to see what you will do to me if I pluck it off.' At which the Jew stretched forth his hand, but drew it back again sharp enough when with a hollow sound the corpse seized the handle of 'Tizona' and drew the blade forth from the scabbard half a palm. Down falls the Jew in a fit, and in rush the priests; and lo! the dead hand still grasps 'Tizona's' hilt, and his fierce eyes seem to roll. Who, after such an experience, would dare to trifle with the remains of so terrible a hero? I cannot say; but, at the present time of writing, what are said to be his bones are deposited at the Ayuntamiento in a glazed case of walnut wood, in the centre of a large hall, and beside them the skeleton of poor Ximena—still faithful to her great hero—*minus her head!**

Against the wall is a stool 900 years old, upon which the Cid's ancestors sat as judges in Burgos, and the Cid himself, an awkward broken thing of worm-eaten wood; a *brasero* he used, and his portrait, blurred and confused out of all knowledge.

The famous chest which he bartered for 800 marks of gold, is in the Cathedral sacristy, hung half way up a wall, a most ancient chest clamped with iron and bearing on its face the evidence of great antiquity.

About the chest the story goes that Cid's pockets being empty in the wars, he filled it with sand and sent it to a Jew with this message: 'The Cid Campeador wants

* Since writing this it is denied that the bones of the Cid rested at Burgos, and they have been brought from Germany to Spain.

money. If you will furnish it, he will pay you back at eighty-nine per cent. interest, leaving you as surety this chest filled with his richest treasures, on one condition, that you take an oath, by Father Abraham, not to undo the lock until the money is delivered.'

The confiding Shylock took the oath and gave the gold. What were his feelings when he opened the chest no one knows!

My little guide laughed heartily as he related the tale, unconscious of the moral.

For the Church of St Agueda you must mount the hill and picture to yourself the Cid in chain armour, face to face with Alonso VI., King of Castile, his hand upon the gospel —a painted missal of the day. 'King Don Alonso,' says the Cid to him, in his terrible voice, 'will you swear that you have not compassed the death of my King and master, your brother Sancho? If you swear falsely, may you die the death of a traitor and of a slave.' To which King Alonso, joining his hand upon the Cid's palm, replies, 'Amen! I swear.'

But he changed colour.

Then the Cid repeats a second time, 'King Don Alphonso, will you further swear you neither counselled nor favoured the murder of the King, your brother and my master? If you swear falsely, may you die the death of a traitor and of a slave.'

Again the King presses his hand and says, 'I swear. Amen!'

But he changed colour.

Then came forth twelve vassals, who confirmed the King's word, and the Cid was at last satisfied, and would have embraced the King, but Alphonso turned away and hated him ever after.

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Having finished with the Cid, I turn to the Cathedral. In one word, it disappoints me. It is too minute, and too ornate—too like a beloved child decked and cosseted, and cared for, until one feels ashamed of not sharing in the general enthusiasm it excites.

Nor is it as an architectural monument in any respect worthy of the stern Gothic age of Saint Ferdinand, who

founded it in honour of his marriage with Beatrix of Swabia, renaissance and flamboyant.

The fact is, one should visit Burgos and Toledo before Seville, Cordova and Granada. Nothing but the simplicity of the purest Gothic can outweigh the impression of the marvellous fantasies of the Moor, or blind me to the fact that the great Spanish churches are often so ornate and overcharged with upholstery and decoration as to fall into the grotesque.

I grow weary of gold retablos at every altar, and walls crowded to overflowing with statues and painted figures, badges, and crowns.

Here at Burgos there are statues even on the spandrils of the dome, the ceilings, semicircles and frontispieces, and every ledge and corner—until giddy with a general sense of topsy-turvyism you turn away. Nowhere does the Coro, with heavy and sculptured walls, so basely fill up the nave. Between this solid erection, the equally solid altar, and the protruding chapels on every hand, there is positively no space at all. Not so much as what Mrs Major Maccan, disposed to dancing, designated as 'the flurr.' The carved ranges of windows round the clerestory are elegant, but too uniform and modern; the lantern, a confusion of basso-relievo figures, colonnettes, lancet windows, arches, and aerial carving, admirable in its way, but it is a way I do not care for; yet, looking up at it from the steps of the high altar, the most striking standpoint in the whole Cathedral, the effect is superb.

Each chapel is the dimension of a church, and there are fourteen of them in all, with some prince, bishop or king entombed in the midst, covered by a rich emblazoned pall, giving the contours as of a human figure. The finest chapel is that of the 'Condestable,' belonging to the Dukes of Frias —Don Pedro de Velasco, Grand Constable of Castile, and his wife, in the centre, lying upon an alabaster tomb, dressed in the elaborate costume of the Renaissance—necklace, ruff, brocade, lace, head dress, draperies, given with marvellous minuteness, even to the tiny curls on the back of a little spaniel, half hidden in the folds of the lady's dress, in so natural an attitude, one asks one's self, 'What will the little creature do when he wakes up and finds his mistress dead?'

A vision of Victoria Balfe, as I saw her, with angel eyes and the complexion of a Hebe, her head bound with a diadem of hair, rises before me as I gaze on the Frias monuments, and I ask myself why *her* Duke of Frias does not perpetuate her memory in marble among his race?

The outside of the Cathedral pleases me best, though much embarrassed by mean buildings, and narrowed by the rise of a steep hill, into which it is built.

The open work of the two spires, 300 feet high, is as delicate as frosted silver, and the bold outline of the lantern, a richness of bracketed points, worked pinnacles and borders, the like of which I never saw but at Milan.

The west front also is remarkable, save for a modern door.

Ascending the hill to visit more churches, I have again to record acute sufferings from boys! Not three or four tormentors, but a multitude, rising as it were prolific from the stones, and increasing each instant in boldness, until, what with the sun, the ascent, and the general bewilderment, I thought I should have fainted.

No use to threaten, for where is the guardia to enforce my words? And the little wretches know it, and triumph. By night there are the excellent Serenos; but by day, evidently, the authorities think everyone can defend himself.

No use to declare in bad Spanish, '*No tengo nada*,' the object being to stare as well as to beg—a purpose they carry out with round full eyes fixed on you like an animal.

What can I do? Like a skilful general, I turn to observe my enemy, and note a possible ally in a shock-haired girl, bound also on the legitimate chase for a *perro* and a stare, but neither rude, nor vulgar, nor ugly, and smiling into my eyes. To her I address myself, and tell her I will reward her handsomely if she shakes off the boys; upon which, with ineffable joy, and closely sticking to my skirts, she and her friend (for she has a friend, expecting, of course, another *perro*) both charge into their midst with admirable gallantry and disperse them. Alas! only temporarily, I regret to say, for at the next turn up the hill, there they are, swarming round me again with howls.

And all this anguish I suffer by reason of the churches, which are not worth the trouble.

Outside Burgos there *are* two interesting churches, well worth the pleasant, breezy drive I took to visit them, drawn by two good mules: the Cartuja de Miraflores, on the summit of a chalky, wind-swept down, sweet with thyme and rosemary, with some fine alabaster tombs: and Las Huelgas (the 'Pleasure Ground'), on the further side of Burgos, through lofty poplar avenues—a royal burying-ground surrounded by walls like a fortress.

Looking inside, I became aware it is a local festival, with an organ playing and a many-coloured crowd from the Campo on their knees—a bore, because it effectually prevents my circulating freely.

Advancing step by step as the crowd allowed, I saw through a grating a superb chapel hung with violet draperies woven in gold, where sat the Abbess on a kind of throne, flanked by two corpulent nuns, listening to a sermon; all three with the oddest head-dresses I ever saw—a black coif with ears, giving an asinine expression, possibly not merited; while behind them, full in the blaze of a golden sunset, a whole feminine chapter filling the ancient stalls.

No one can enter this chapel but the King, and that by leave of the Abbess only, who ranks as a Princess Palatine, is mitred, and once bore the seignorial power of life and death.

Around lie royal tombs covered with gold brocade: Alonzo VII. of Castile, El Emperador; his son, the eighth of that name; another Alonso, 'the Wise,' and Henry I. of Castile.

When the sermon was ended, and the robust monk with a deep baritone voice had pronounced the blessing, and descended the steps of a little wooden ladder somewhat perilous for his weight, the Lady Abbess and her two lady-in-waiting nuns advanced to the iron gate to compliment him in a lofty way.

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Thus it was I could not see the articulated statue of Santiago, a curious mediæval toy which knighted royal personages in ancient days, and sometimes placed even crowns upon monarchs' heads—nor the banner taken at the Battle of Navarrete by the Black Prince, while fighting for Don Pedro; nor examine the high altar at which Saint

Ferdinand kept his knightly vigil, as also our own Edward I., the husband of Eleanor of Castile.

NOTE.—The Fonda del Norte is so bad at Burgos, I advise no one to go there (all the same, they tell me the Rafaela is worse). The landlady, an atrocious shrew, asked me double for everything, and on my remonstrating, she, in most voluble French, abused me (for, being of a mixed nationality, she unites the vices of both nations), rapped me smartly on the shoulder, and threatened to turn me out! Make your bargain in *writing*, and with *herself;* she ignores her liege lord, with whom I had spoken (when I appealed to him he was *non inventus*)—altogether the rudest person I ever met in Spain.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

LEON.

Charm of the Place—Approach—Convent of San Marcos—Exterior—The Entrance Barred—An Ideal Hotel—Cathedral—Unfinished still!—Church of San Isidoro el Real—City Walls—Adieu to Leon!—The Climate goes off—Turning Night into Day.

I STAYED two days at Leon, and was so charmed with the old place, I would gladly have made it four, but time failed me.

Leon has a charm I feel, but perhaps cannot express—as of an antique capital falling, but not disgraced, with something still left of the majesty of the ancient kingdom, althought that kingdom exists no more.

Cities, like individuals, are sympathetic. Leon to me is eminently so: I left it with sorrow—I should return to it with joy.

Dear old town! Fain would I leave a memory of your ancient walls, spared by wicked Witiza, narrow, low-roofed streets, rich portals and balustraded galleries, let into dim palaces full of northern colour—deep red, brown, and sepia;—friendly and homely after the African fantasies of

Granada and Seville, and telling kindly to the eye against a pale-blue sky, the shelter of green thickets and verdant banks—a sylvan paradise, where the sweet song of nightingales blends with the long-drawn notes of Castilian peasants melodious by purling streams.

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On approaching Leon through a widespread plain, the snow-capped range of the Asturias rises—a varied chain, cheering the solitude of grassy wolds, where even cattle are wanting. As I proceed at a reasonable speed (for indeed, as to speed, the Spanish rail has a worse reputation than it deserves), I picture to myself the rocky fells, rugged precipices, winding mule-paths and emerald glens pent up within these rude summits; the keen thin air biting on mountain-tops; the mossy perfume of valleys shut up in rocky bosoms; the sweep of the sea-wind over larch and fir; the wild music of unknown waterfalls and nameless torrents running through granite defiles to the sea.

Approaching Leon, I come upon pleasant fields bordered with high poplar limits, rivers gliding over smooth beds, and a perfect maze of wooded background. At the station—a most rustic little place, the people with friendly manners and that narrowness of life which bespeaks the north—my eye catches, to the left, a sumptuous pile across the river, glistening as with golden walls. This is the great Convent of San Marcos, the wonder of northern Spain, the architecture platuresque, which I call *rococo*—a style I would not choose, but in this glowing stone gorgeous, and the effect so admirably contrasting with the universal green, I waive all observations. I cannot tell half the friezes, festoonings, niches, busts, and medallions in *alto relievo* (like the frescoed *Concetti* in Raffael's Loggia) which unfold before the eye, history and mythology jostling each other in a delightful confusion of age and subject, and you yourself led captive whether you will or no! Santiago on horseback stands over the sumptuous portal, and at the farther end a grand old tower catches the sunbeams. To the order of Santiago this house belongs.

I shall never forget the loveliness of a grove of lilacs in full blossom in the cloisters (modern but spacious). It seemed to me I had never known what lilacs were before.

But my contentment suddenly ended at the rude refusal of a red-faced priest to let me enter the church because *I was a woman.*

Beside San Marcos a noble bridge spans the river, from which I got a peep over far distances, to the abrupt outline of the Galician mountains, rising out of a boundless plain as into the 'promised land;' then enter the town through pleasant double avenues of elms bordering smiling meadows.

Now, if I were asked for the *ideal* hotel one is always looking for, I should say the Suizo at Leon. On one side nice bright rooms, overlooking an ancient Plaza, set with the deep red walls of mediæval buildings—the embattled tower of the old church of San Isidoro proudly pre-eminent—and gravely ornamented roofs all gargoyled—a sombre population moving to and fro. On the other, infinite greenery, the song of birds and perfume of homely flowers, orange and citron trees pressing into the balconies, and a little *huerta* of herbs and shrubs, where stacks of bees keep up continual murmurs.

I cannot separate the old capital and kingdom of Leon from the Suizo Hotel; indeed, I will not assert that it did not colour my whole impressions of Leon. Certainly Romans and Goths, and the personality of Leonese conquerors, merging into Castile in the shape of Fernando, first King of both, mixes up in my mind with snug rooms, half-town, half-country, soft beds, the voices of cheerful townsfolk, hard featured but kind, and the odour of wholesome meals, at the long table at which I, as the only lady, received prandial honours from a company so impressed by my presence no one spoke.

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The square before the Cathedral is a kind of desert, and the Cathedral itself a distress, being so honeycombed by scaffolding it is impossible to see anything but the starry roof and lateral windows.

The west front, with three deeply embayed arches set on clustered shafts, the whole lined with statues, reminded me of two churches widely different—Siena and Chârtres—the lightness and simplicity is Italian, the gaudy decoration French. (I cannot reconcile the divergence of the two. You must go to Leon and do it for yourself.)

What I *could* see of the interior (in the pointed style) is delicately chaste and strangely severe for Spain, the painted windows standing out in heraldic splendour before a setting sun.

Someone speaks of the 'gossamer proportions,' and this is true, and the west façade has a certain simplicity also, though ornate. The towers are heavy and not uniform, but there is a triangular frontispiece, as at Siena, which redeems much. I cannot conceive of a finer Gothic monument when visible.

But when? The funds are low—the whole of the edifice is falling, and Leon is but a poor city. Unless some local benefactor comes forward to help the architect—the well-known Madrazo—I fear a century will pass and find workmen hammering still.

The church of San Isidoro el Real, opposite the hotel, is rubbed in in broad dashes of browns and amber. A low Gothic archway here, a platuresque façade there—broad escutcheons on darkly tinged walls, grotesque gargoyles, projecting canopies, and lace-bordered parapets, all struggling under a deeply arched tower, the landmark of the place. The church is called Real because its founder was Fernando I. (Saint Ferdinand), King of United Leon and Castile; and he brought here the body of San Isidoro, who, though named 'the Egregious Doctor,' was also a fighting knight-errant, and so appears over the south entrance armed *cap-à-pied*, on horseback, as when, like the great 'twin brethren' of ancient Rome, he appeared (in spirit) on the battlefield of Baza, to frighten the Moslem host.

Built into the church are the strange old city walls, spared in their day by our Toledian acquaintance 'wicked Witiza,' the Goth, but now dismantled, and capped by a succession of towers, so remarkably low, one fancies the upper half must have been knocked off. Extremely curious all the same, and quaint to a degree, with a smack of Moorish architecture about the *tapia* turrets, as rebuilt by Alonzo II., on Roman foundations. But at this point such a weariness of churches, walls, and towers attacks me, such a longing to plunge into the leafy wilds of mountain-bound Galicia, as my eye catches the alternate rays of light and shade of a

coming tempest, falling in arrowy streaks across the fertile plains, I saw no more.

And so, adieu, dear Leon! Long may thy fair woods wave, and rippling streams pour into deep pools, where black-haired damsels spread snowy linen on the emerald banks, and twist and rend it into Gorgon shapes. Sing on, sweet nightingales, as you sang to me, and charm other strangers. Shine, brightest of suns, on chequered walls and grim old barriers, over which such earthquakes of time and war have rolled—and smile, ye infinite plains in shadowy distance. On *you* my passage made no mark, but *of* you I carry away an image which clings to me like the fantastic outlines of a delicious dream.

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I have always hitherto stood up for the climate of Spain. In the south it is equable and delightful, but in the north I will defend it no more.

Yesterday, at Leon, the heat was intense, and before night, coming across the plains to Valladolid, a chill tornado rose that would have done honour to grim December—and this is laughing May! And it has continued, that tornado, obstinately, ever since, tearing and bellowing with such clouds of dust, every separate wind seems to have opened his storm-bag.

Then there is that frightful mania in Spain for midnight travelling. (I suppose the first railroad was started in summer and the heat, and as nothing ever changes, it has continued at summer hours ever since.) Even the shortest of distances must be done at night. There is but one train, and that is nocturnal, a '*Cosa de España*' no fellow can understand.

To start at one or two a.m., and to find everyone, including the dogs, much more wide-awake at the station than they are in the day, is intensely irritating. Still, in a country where the favourite hour of important business appointments with Alcaldes and Governors of Provinces is *midnight*, one may at least accord the merit of a certain consistency of habits. Nor need you imagine that you are to go on direct; there are always two or three changes contrived, and one or even three hours to wait somewhere in the small hours, seated upon hard chairs or harder benches, and to get per-

haps forty winks and a nightmare. When the train starts a porter pops in his head, and with a voice that would not wake a baby observes in a general way that 'the train for Zamora, or Medina, or Salamanca is leaving.' If you do not hear him, or do not understand what he says, no one wakes you or takes the slightest trouble about you in any way. There you may sit until doomsday, for what they care.

The names of the stations are rarely called out, requiring a fixity of attention, say at three a.m. on a dark night, combating with an overwhelming 'imposition' of sleep, on the principle prevailing in Spain, that, the means of locomotion provided, you must use them for yourself.

CHAPTER XL.

SALAMANCA.

Still those Plains!—The Spanish Student—A Squalid Town—The Square—An Excellent *Fonda*—A City of Wonders—The Cathedral—Imposing Exterior—Equally Magnificent within—El Cristo de las Batallas—The Old Church—The Bishop and Cellini—Façade of the University Library—A Childish Suppliant—The University—The Library—Casa de las Conchas—Casa de Selinas—Palacio del Conde—Las Augustinas Recoletas—Santo Domingo and Other Buildings—French Vandalism—The Arapiles—Present Squalor.

I ARRIVE at Salamanca at seven in the morning, still in the midst of plains hideous to behold—not the sweeping grandeur of some Spanish plains, nor with the mountain borders of Leon and Galicia, but drab coloured and bare, just as if nature had got tired hereabouts and didn't care.

A horrible waste for the once rollicking student to contemplate. (I see him in spirit young, in a cocked hat and gown, hurrying along to college, very pale and thin, as from joyous vigils; a creature full of *esprit*, and mocking as is his nation—who knew so well how 'to take' the 'immortal Don' with flattery and kissing of his hands when his life was published at Salamanca.)

'Which of my actions is, I pray you, the most admired?' asks simple Don Quixote, at which the wily student winks in reply, and says 'Opinion is divided between so many.'

Surely no place ever ran into such extremes as Salamanca. The present so squalid; the past so brilliant. In such an ugly country too, like a jewel in a pig's snout. People say there is but one Granada. Allow me to add there is also but one Salamanca.

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At this moment, half asleep and not certain if the arid prospect before me is vision or reality, I am jolting along in the awkwardest of omnibuses over a road like a bog, full of holes and ruts. Geronimo, the chinless, is by my side in his favourite attitude 'of the sick parrot,' with arms arranged like claws — not an agreeable object to contemplate in the early dawn of a May morning—*Ma che vuole?*

Rows of miserable hovels announce the city, and a general aspect of penury in man and beast. No colour —and life almost died out, the men in ragged vests, knee breeches, and stockings much dilapidated; the women veiled and hidden in dirty rags.

Then we flash into a superb square, the largest in Spain, where a little life circulates under grand ranges of pillared colonnades; a square so rich in the creamy reflection of its gorgeous walls, old Sol himself seems to have baked them.

Kings and queens look out from the façades in busts, niches, and lozenges, and there is a superabundance of ornament everywhere, thoroughly *churriqueresque;* I say this advisedly, because Churriguera, the architect who created this style of *rococo*, like the Italian Renaissance run to seed and grown crazy, was a native of Salamanca —not that he had anything special to do with this Plaza, built by Andres Garcia in 1700, and inaugurated by a bull-fight at which 20,000 persons were present, seated on raised *estrades.*

Down a rough street, then up a wretched alley, and here is my *fonda*, La Burgalesa (note it well), where I enjoy excellent bed and board, in two sunny quiet rooms looking

on a retired Plaza, for the moderate sum of seven francs daily. The courteous old landlady, Amparo, who contemplates me timidly as she asks that price (evidently for strangers), is very proud of her beds, and with reason; my praise of them quite won her heart. At dinner, all her simple kindness could devise was put forth to press on me her dishes (and excellent they were—she superintends the kitchen and her husband waits). When she found I could not eat of *all*, and there were many, she gravely asked me what was amiss? If I would only say what I liked, she would go out and buy it in the market. Good simple soul, long may she live to dispense such veritable hospitality!

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An hour after my arrival I am out again with a ragged boy for cicerone, and become from that moment a prey to wildest bewilderment, by reason of the marvellous sights I am shown—so surpassing, so complete. (Salamanca, possessed of the rare felicity of every building harmonious and finished to the last hair, nothing blurred or imperfect, all by a master-hand, and called forth so spontaneously, I swear suitable words will not come to me.)

A flattering public has ascribed to me some powers of description; but I feel utterly powerless before that long day's ramble with the ragged boy, who at last in guttural Castilian excused himself for leaving me in a most remote quarter, by his engagement with the station omnibus, explaining thereby a pervading odour of stables we seemed to carry about with us everywhere as an atmosphere, and which I had attributed to a specialty in the air.

The Cathedral, take it all in all, is the sublimest monument of the sublime age of the Catholic sovereigns. It is happily placed on a rise, with ample space all round, to show of what infinite grandeur the platuresque style is capable when pushed to its utmost limit.

To build it, a consultation of all the architects of Spain was called, as at a royal birth. Juan Gill de Ontanon won the preference; nor was court patronage wanting, the first bishop being Francisco, son of Beatrice Bobadilla, Isabel's dearest friend.

Three separate tiers of roofs—each with lacey parapets and fretted pinnacles—rise before the eye; the splendour of two portals breaks the lines, and there are chiselled canopies, statues, medallions, and *fiorituri* as in clouds. Yet nowhere, inside or out, can it be said to be overcharged or heavy. Nothing extravagant, but all subdued to the harmony of florid Gothic. The platuresque ornaments laid on in groupings like raised embroidery on a plain ground, and delicate as on a casket. Sometimes on dead gold, sometimes on alabaster or on stone, each detail finished with a microscopic accuracy utterly amazing.

The warm tint of the native stone, of which the whole of Salamanca is built, adds greatly to the effect of this ornate style of architecture—each detail brought out with a roundness and a distinctness the elaborate finish justifies. The towers of the Cathedral are obviously too small for the size of the vast pile; but my eye was so occupied with its manifold beauties I only thought of this defect afterwards.

(The perfection about everything at Salamanca is enchanting. Even where art is inferior, completeness is refreshing; how much more when, as here, all beauty is present.)

Nor is the interior of this grand structure one whit behind the outside. The roof, supported on graceful shafts, is a marvellously delicate creation, touched with gold in the bold groinings, capitals, and rosettes, and with great masses of blue, clustering where the pillars join under the lantern.

The Catholic sovereigns disclose their badges and emblems and coats-of-arms in every possible position. The scroll work and fringe of vines and flowers are admirable. The alto-relievos, basso-relievos, busts, statues in circular frames, graceful double galleries, and burnished shrines (now and then a false note struck by a too churriqueresque altar or screen), the carvings in wood and stone, *azulejo* tiles and retablos, would be wearisome to mention. Not an inch of the walls undecorated! But it is the whole which overwhelms you. The solemn service and procession of tonsured priests winding through deep vistas of

clustered bays towards the choir; the twin organs thundering aloft to each other, in a rush as of a musical tornado; the golden tracery on chapels and alabaster tombs, where kings or bishops repose on beds carved as in Oriental tapestry; the magnificence mingled with the reverence of the aisles, the huge size—the gloom—the splendour!

As I sat there upon a marble bench lost in admiration, I saw a canon glide by late into his stall, and I could not but think that in this far distant place he lived greater than kings!

But I was not permitted to be long alone. A dried-up chip of a man, toothless and tottering, emerged from a corner to show me 'El Cristo de las Batallas,' a small Byzantine crucifix in bronze, carried by the Cid in all his battles on his saddle-bow, just as Saint Ferdinand bore the image of the Virgin—the crown and body cloth gilt, the rest in chequer-work enamel. A certain militant Bishop Gerolimo brought it here and hung it over his own tomb (hideously churriqueresque) out of affection, being confessor to the Cid, and having passed his life in riding up and down the country after him, carrying another crucifix of wood, neither of which holy emblems, however, nor the presence of the bishop himself, exercised any humanising influence in the matter of burnings and slaughter.

Then the old sacristan unloosed a door in another plateresque portal, and took me down a flight of steps into the old church, rambling and Romanesque—much admired by poor Mr Street as a typical specimen of the age. (The architect, Juan Gil, had the good sense to leave it intact, simply joining on the new Cathedral to it) 'Portis Salamantina,' as it is called in learned books—full of warm tintings, old frescoes, paintings on panels and ancient sepulchres. I call it Romanesque, but rather it should be Norman Gallic, as erected in the time of a warlike prelate Jerome, a Frenchman of Perigord, friend of the Cid. Which special bishop is particularised by Benvenuto Cellini in his memoirs as Monsignore Salamanca I cannot tell. At all events, he was coeval with the new Cathedral, and sympathetic to its taste, else he would never have ordered a golden chased dish from the Italian.

'Give it!' cries Monsignore's majordomo, rushing all in a hurry into Cellini's studio, the perspiration dropping from his face. 'Quick, quick! Monsignore desires to show it to some friends. They are waiting;' and he would have seized it.

'Not so fast,' replies Cellini, drawing a pistol and pointing it at him (the great artist was rapid at his arms). 'Until Monsignore pays me, he shall not have the dish.'

Then the majordomo began to cry out to Cellini 'as people do before the cross, and threatened to return with some Spaniards who would cut him in two! And they did come, a troop' (I am quoting from the memoirs). 'Then I,' says Cellini, 'seized my loaded arquebuse, and match in hand faced them, and would have fired, but that they ran away.'

When Monsignore de Salamanca heard of it he was much scandalised.

'Tell the beggarly Italian,' says he, 'if he does not instantly deliver up the dish, nothing shall be left of him but his ears.'

But Benvenuto held good, and was so wroth that many great personages were forced to interfere to induce him to give it up at all. Particulars these found in a document in the archives of Nuestra Senora de Pilar, as well as in the memoirs.

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Then, when I went out and beheld the chiselled *façade* of the University Library, turned towards a majestic quadrangle of strangely flattened Moorish arches, the like of which I never saw before—the quadrangle opening into another, still larger, in the same style, leading to various 'schools'—it seemed to me I looked upon the very apotheosis of florid architecture. Hitherto pure Grecian and sober Gothic had won me, but now the splendours of Salamanca have prevailed, and I fall prostrate with rapture before a profusion of ornamentation undreamed of before.

Not a large *façade* this of the library, but a gem carved in high relief of solemn figures sitting on chiselled thrones, with diapered backgrounds, mailed knights in canopied niches, visors down, heraldic monsters, the tree of life bearing a crop of Cupids, the crowned lions of Castile rampant,

and badges and shields, marking Ferdinand and Isabel as the creators.

While I stood here motionless, my eye losing itself in the entrancing poetry of never-ending lines, the sun shone out and lighted up the whole into a creamy glory.

Again I thought myself alone, and revelled in the solitude.

Not at all. At my feet crouched a little cripple seven or eight years old, supported on a crutch, her dark eyes, dimmed by disease fixed on mine, and following the eyes, a childish mouth which opened and said these words,—

'Señorita, señorita, I love you very much.'

'Why?' I answered, looking down on her, not best pleased to be interrupted.

'Because,' and a faint smile flitted over her thin face, and she stretched out a tiny hand imploringly, 'I know you will give me a limosna.'

'Why?' I asked again, curious to know the reason she would give.

'You carry a book, señorita' (this was true, Murray was under my arm); 'those,' continued the child, with a reflective air, 'who carry books are strangers, and give limosna; but the people here, *nada* (nothing); I might die on the *calle*, and they would grudge me a *cuarto*.'

To this wise child I presented a peseta, which to her seemed a fortune so boundless she nearly fainted!

'Who sent you out to beg?' I asked, helping her to hobble into a corner.

'Mamma,' answered she; 'you see I have a bad leg.'

Here a poor little limb eaten by scrofula was disclosed.

'Mamma tells me to show it, but it is no use, and it is very cold. I was sure the señorita would give me a limosna without seeing my leg. No one ever gave me a peseta before,' at which she laughed and seized my hand and kissed it, then fell back exhausted against the wall, a smile of beatitude lingering on her face.

The University itself, to which this divine façade is attached, is a vast but monotonous building, a very desolation of solitude; old world class-rooms, formed for the joyous life of ten thousand *estudiantes*, now reduced to five hun-

dred, strike chill, and the few groups standing about do but haunt the walls. From habit the porter asked me for my card, then left me to wander at will through spacious galleries, where a bachelor or two lingered in cap and gown, and a superannuated beadle contemplated me with curious eyes.

Outside each *dulas*, or lecture-room, a tablet over the door denotes the philosophy or science once taught within; a pulpit or *catedratico* inside for the lecturer, and rows of benches. The library itself is a handsome room (style Louis XIV.), and there is an inner chamber in which the bachelor about to dispute or wrangle is forced to remain for twenty-four hours alone, a sentinel at the door, in order duly to consider the subject in question. A cheerful prospect for a rollicking young man, in company with old books of polemical lore, chained to the reading-desks.

There is also the Colegio of Santiago Apostol, and the Colegio de Nobles Irlandeses, founded by Philip II. Who or what these *noble Irishmen* may be, I know not; but they have a principal named Cowan, are trained for the priesthood, and inhabit a noble patio with fluted pillars.

The old houses built for an age of chivalry sent me into fresh ecstasies; I longed to invent new adjectives in their honour. Nothing in the known world exceeds the elegance of the Casa de las Conchas, in a dismal street opposite the University, with a pavement agonising to walk on—encrusted all over with such delicately wrought cockle-shells, that the light shows through them. Heraldic shields, sculptured doors, and clustered casements run along the front, the casements parted into small panels by rare old ironwork; a mediæval home, fitted for knights and warriors, in which no meaner man should inhabit than Bernardo del Carpio, the opponent 'of the brave Roland' at Ronces Valles, who, when he came to Salamanca to meet his father, and was going forward to kiss him, felt the weight of a dead hand between his fingers, the cruel King of Leon having mounted his murdered parent on horseback, and dressed him in splendid robes, to lure Bernardo home and capture him as a hostage.

Alone to see the Casa de las Conchas, a journey to Salamanca would be well repaid.

Not a whit less artistic is the Casa de Selinas, with its arched front and deserted patio, with a projecting gallery held up by carved Titans (if I were not in Spain, I should swear this was Italian), the bold attitudes and strained, uplifted arms worthy of Michael Angelo.

Also the Palacio del Conde Monterey (known as 'the good slow man,' the favourite of Philip IV., who, as viceroy of Naples, became so rich, that the beggars gave as a blessing 'to possess gold like Monterey'), where, on the lengthened line of an upper storey, deeply embayed arches lie under a flat roof, edged with a high transparent border, as of *guipure* lace; at each end twin turrets or miradoros, with delicately pillared windows—a fitting outlook for ladies in ruff and fardingale, to gaze down at gallant *caballeros* capricoling in the street in shining armour and nodding plumes, or listen to serenades of black-gowned *estudiantes* twanging guitars, while maskers tread wild measures on the stones, and comely lovers lurk in the shadow of Gothic portals.

Las Augustinas Recoletas, opposite, a magnificent convent, rich in coloured marbles and stately monuments, was also built by 'the good man' Monterey, who married a sister of the Conde Duque Olivares, and is mentioned by Lord Clarendon as living at Naples in the days of Ribera and Lanfranco, and making of his house a school of Neapolitan art.

Alas! for these fair mediæval houses, now empty, their stately portals walled, their sculptured casements and delicate *trilleages* barred, their patios gutted, and ruin in every stone; not only empty, but degraded to the vulgar uses of a poverty-stricken race to which filth is as a necessity!

It is a melancholy fact that, during the three days I stayed at Salamanca, I did not meet one single decently-dressed person!

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Had I not seen the Cathedral, I should say Santo Domingo is the finest church in Salamanca; the front worked in shrouds of golden network, as though let down from heaven to cover it; the entrance under a superb elliptic arch, with a view of the central altar, by the dreaded

Churriquera himself. Then there is the nunnery of Sanso Espiritu, La Clerica, the Jesuits' church, an enormous pile with a vile churriqueresque retablo, and Las Duenas, near what remains of the much-breached city wall (so lonely a spot I actually saw a sportsman with a gun, watching for rabbits outside), with mysterious memories of Santa Teresa, who believed herself espoused here by Christ. The Calle de los Muertos, so called from another mediæval house with rows of sculptured skulls, outside, and the Cuesta del Seminario.

Truly did I feel that eye and brain refused their office. Before I returned to old Amparo and the Burgalese, I think nothing in this world would have induced me to turn my head.

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The ruin of Salamanca was wrought by the French during the Peninsular War. Under the pretext of making fortifications, they pulled down thirteen convents and twenty colleges, and damaged or destroyed many of the finest monuments for firewood.

The despatches of the Great Duke are my authority: 'I hear,' says he, 'that the enemy have destroyed thirteen out of twenty-five convents, and twenty out of twenty-five colleges in this celebrated seat of learning.'

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Down by a broad river, the Tormes, flowing under waving branches of aspen and alder, is a solid Roman bridge of many arches. By this you reach the neighbourhood of the battlefield, about a couple of miles distant, near two knolls known as the Arapiles.

A false move by Marmont (after what the French did at Salamanca, one is *charmed* that they were soundly defeated *on the spot*) gave the Duke an advantage in position which he did not possess in numbers (100,000 French to 60,000 English).

Both he and Marmont endeavoured to obtain possession of the rise of the Arapiles. The French won, and that brought on a general engagement.

'I never,' says the Duke, 'saw an army receive such a beating in my life.'

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I am conscious of a consistent regret in visiting these rare old capitals of a by-gone age, introducing me to fresh pages of history and unknown styles of art, that I cannot linger; but once the first amazement past, life becomes too rough and elementary even in the pleasantest of rustic *fondas* and with the kindest of Amparos to care for me. Even my elastic temperament cannot bear the strain.

The general wretchedness is depressing to behold, walking on what are called pavements a torture, and every little luxury of civilised life unattainable. I go about accompanied by a light brigade of boys, varied by beggars. Nothing can shake them off; every movement is watched, every action commented on.

As to anything on wheels, except an omnibus to the station, it is impossible, and if it were not, I should be so shaken I should get out in disgust.

With all this in my mind I felt depressed, and booked myself second-class to Valladolid to see 'los pobres.'

CHAPTER XLI.

SALAMANCA TO VALLADOLID.

Carlists and Alphonsists—Castle de la Mota—A Monk and Nun—Savagery of North Spain—Valladolid and its Associations—Disappointing Reality—Social Amenities—The Spirit of Philip II. pervades All—Other Memories—Front of San Pablo—San Gregorio—Unique Monuments—A Visit to the Theatre—A Few Notable Addresses.

BESIDE me sat a nun, resigned and quiet, in her veil of black, and a horrible bullet-headed child, the son of a peasant woman with an enormous basket, who was opposite. Both nun and child were silent; but the woman speedily informed herself where I came from and whither I was going.

'Spain was a fine country,' she said, 'when there was no fighting,' and she drew her fingers across her throat. 'I live in the Basque Provinces,' she went on to relate. 'We had plenty of it there—Carlists or Alphonsists, it was all the

same to us; their guns struck alike. Not a house in our village that has not shot-holes, and many gutted and ruined in the part where I live at Hernani. It is not good,' she went on to say, 'to live among the spirits of slaughtered men who died without the Sacraments. There are bones everywhere, and we cannot sleep at nights for groans. It is for that I am leaving. On the plain it is cheerful, and the dead are still. Does the señora know this country?' she asked, breaking off, and looking out of window, pointed to an ancient castle built of small red bricks, laid edge-ways, with lofty towers rising out of corn fields. 'That is the Castle de la Mota at Medina del Campo, where Queen Isabel died.' (The good woman forgot to say it was the prison of Cæsar Borgia after he left Jativa.) 'Now we are close to the station of Venta de Banos. If Uste wishes to eat, we stop here for an hour; but I have plenty in my basket to which Uste is most welcome'—upon which she woke up her boy, and proceeded to unpack the provisions, the pale-faced nun the while taking a single slice of bread out of her pocket, which she slowly ate, after running her fingers over her rosary as a kind of grace, the woman offering her no share of her food, though so hospitable to me. Then a corpulent priest got in with a shovel-hat like Don Basilio in the opera, and a voluminous cloak, which he wrapped round him with the dignity of a Roman senator. I naturally expected some recognition between him and the nun, but as soon as she saw him she coloured, sunk her pallid face deeper into her veil, and drew a breviary from her pocket, from which she never raised her eyes.

The priest spoke to no one, and stared out of window; the bullet-headed boy stared at him, and, the peasant woman relapsing into sleep after an ample repast, we sped on in silence.

To travel in luxury you must confine yourself to Southern Spain. The riches of the land lie there in mercantile adventure, mining speculations, and agricultural wealth. In the south, cities are cities as in any other land, with their luxuries and appliances—a little rough, it is true, and halting as to refinement and comfort—but still substantially *cities*.

The North is still savage, and savage because it is ignorant

and poor. The rail brings little to improve or enrich it. Trade is stagnant, and travellers hurry on to kindlier regions. At Malaga, Seville, Barcelona, and Cadiz, in good hotels under a prepetual sun, you may winter in the enjoyment of every substantial requisite of life; but who in their senses would think of spending even a month at Burgos or Leon?

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The name of Valladolid (Belad Waled) came to me with a glamour I cannot explain, the echo of great events in the annals of a vast kingdom: the majesty of 'Sommo Carlo,' who lived here; the autocracy of Philip II., who was born within its walls; the fires of the first *auto-da-fé*, lit here by Philip (at which the unfortunate Don Carlos assisting, seated at his father's side, was smitten with such horror that he forthwith espoused the Protestant cause in the Low Countries); the power of the Inquisition, established here under Torquemada; the splendour of the Duke de Lerma, the autocratic favourite of Philip III., '*sombra de príncipe*,' as his father called him—his ostentation displayed here amid the fabulous extravagance of a fantastic court: the magnificent foundations of the good, though prejudiced, Ximenes; the city where Columbus died, Cervantes published 'Don Quixote,' Berruguete, the Spanish Leonardo da Vinci, carver and artist, sculptor and architect, lived; the excellent painter Alonso Cano (said to have killed his wife, although its was urged that her dead hand clasped a lock of auburn ringlets, and his curls were *black*); also Juan de Juni, evidently an Italian name Espanolised, whose various works with brush and chisel are so admired at the Museo—all this forming a kind of pabulum in my brain, causing me to look on Valladolid with an awed expectancy I found difficult to explain.

What a deception! Of all the nasty towns in Northern Spain, Valladolid is the nastiest. The capital of bugs, dirt, and unsightliness, all collected in the Fonda del Signo, which I advise everyone to avoid like poison. If you give an order, a laugh; if you ring a bell, no answer.

'Better luck *mañana*,' cries a mocking *criada*, as she leads me into a stinking room without a window, and retreats

with an exasperating grin and a '*Buenas noches*' more cynical than civil.

To-day, at the *table d'hôte*, seated by Miss H—, and endeavouring to find something to eat not smothered in grease, a loud talking at the other end of the table arrests my attention. A horsedealer had entered to speak to a friend, and omitted to take off his hat, a dire offence, observed and severely commented on *sotto voce* by the various males present, the discussion ending by a well-known journalist, Señor Loma, rising, and in a loud voice expressing the sentiments of the company to the effect that the *caballero* should remove his hat. This the horsedealer did quite quietly, ended his talk, and departed, but immediately reappeared, having, as he explained to the company in a set oration, turned the matter over in his mind, and not feeling satisfied, he had returned to demand a reparation to his honour, gravely compromised by the language addressed to him. In one word, he continued, would Señor Loma explain what he meant?

What the horsedealer meant was pretty evident, for as he spoke he whisked a heavy horsewhip in his hand, upon which up jumped the journalist, and in another oration much more voluble (it is possible the horsewhip influenced him) exonerated himself from any reflection on the *caballero's* honour, but as simply having done his duty in the presence of ladies.

All the gentlemen joined in with *vivas*. The horsedealer, white with passion, continued to scream about his offended honour, and a grand *mêlée* seemed inevitable (heightened by the whisking of the horsewhip, which by his movements the horsedealer evidently intended to lay on the back of the journalist), when, as by a miracle, all cooled down, bows and hand-shakings were exchanged with Señor Loma, and mutual assurances of respect expressed on both sides, the horsedealer finally escorted to the door with many ponderous compliments.

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Alas! the better luck prophesied next day by the *criada* did not come. My room is not changed, and again it has suddenly turned from fierce heat to fiercer cold—a glacial wind blowing, which whirls up clouds of dust into the mouth and nose. Such are the auspices under which I

set out to see Valladolid, which I beg to put down as the most unsympathetic locality to be found in the broad peninsula of Spain.

Seriously, it seems to me that the spirit of Philip pervades his native town, and clings to it as it were, with the curse of monotonous gloom, the expression of his own dismal nature.

One meets Philip everywhere. In the long barren streets (and how the dust did roll like waves there!), in the low-roofed house opposite, San Pablo, where he was born, with a rough old patio and a gracefully-curved casement turned to the street. (Why Charles V., who ruled from sun to sun, could not have found his beloved Isabel a better *locale* for her *accouchement* is hard to say!)

In the Cathedral, a cold, sombre structure, designed by Herrera (I know him, and hate him), the ditto of the Escorial Church, only this one is unfinished and much smaller, but in the same detestable Græco-Romano style Philip affected, because it pictured his own dull mind.

In the vast Plaza Mayor, the ugliest square in Europe, one whole side blank, where he held his first great *auto-da-fé* on ascending the throne, by way of a fiesta!

Nor have you done with Philip in these special localities. His spirit follows you in the barrenness of the Alameda, in the broadness of the thoroughfares, so unlike the picturesque lanes of Cordova and Seville, in the lonely open spaces, and in an undefinable voidness and emptiness you never shake off until you reach the station.

Other memories there are, but all subordinate. The Casa de las Argollas, named from the iron links of the chains worn there by the imprisoned Constable of Castile, Don Alvaro de Luna, under *artesonado* ceilings, powerful as Wolsey before he was beheaded as a traitor to king and country—the city where Blanche of Navarre met her fate in the person of her husband, Don Pedro, who abandoned her next day with the vile taunt that she was the mistress of his brother, Fadrique, who had wedded her by proxy in Navarre; the residence of Cardinal Ximenes, the most enlightened statesman and prelate Spain ever knew; of Philip IV., who by his will brought in the Bourbons; of Gondemar, ambassador to our James I., who inhabited the

Casa del Sol, also of the great Bonaparte, who passed some weeks at Valladolid doing his best to devastate and to destroy.

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Yet I am going to contradict myself so far as to declare that in a far corner of this repulsive town I beheld one of the most wondrous platuresque church-fronts the world can show—San Pablo. San Pablo, in flamboyant Gothic, massed with small single figures and groups, in separate squares and canopies, on a delicate ground-work, diapered and chequered; and adjoining San Pablo (before which I stood transfixed, in spite of wind and dust, myself like a statue), the superbly decorated College and Convent of San Gregorio, built by Cardinal Ximenes, with a façade and patio so astounding in strange mediæval beauty, that just as I was forming the words to Miss H—, who was with me, 'Never go to Valladolid!' I cried out, 'Go! Spite of horrible *fondas*, Philip's troublesome ghost, and nightmares of Herrera's Græco-Romano architecture loading earth. Go! even though Boreas himself stood in the way to stay you!'

Such gorgeous monuments of advanced Gothic (I hate to call it *barocco*) are not found out of Spain. It is a style peculiar to the country and to its semi-Moorish tastes. The genius of the land lent itself to arabesque and surface ornament; the native quarries furnished proper materials, and the wealth of the New World defrayed the costs. A splendid age, expressed in splendid architecture, bolder and gaudier than anything found elsewhere. Out of Spain it might be deemed extravagant, but here toned down by a fine artistic sense of harmony proper to the people, and the characteristic gravity of native artists, who, with souls on fire, knew where to pause.

There is nothing like the architecture of Salamanca and Valladolid in Italy, nor in Germany, nor in France. Cellini might have dreamt of it for a casket, or Albert Durer executed it for a shrine.

Nothing brings back the majesty of Old Spain more than such monuments. The sight of them forms an epoch in one's life—a sort of ecstatic jubilee to celebrate silently to

yourself, in glad rejoicings that such things are, and that you are privileged to enjoy them!

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Not knowing what to do, alone in a bedroom, where I am to remain until one in the morning, to take the train to Avila—in company with one hard chair, and a table with three legs—I while away an hour or two by going to the theatre. The hour announced was nine; but no particular reason appeared to exist why it should not be ten. All was in *statu quo*—the curtain down, people talking in the boxes, and the orchestra, after playing a tune or two, languidly lighting cigarettes, and turning towards the audience.

When the curtain did rise, a lady, mounted on property rocks, rushed forth, clasping a dummy baby to her breast, and a nobleman of loose morals sung a chorus with other ladies, who each presented him with a souvenir of the same kind in dummies. We had bandits, traitors, and distressed princesses, all of portentous dulness, with bad singing, equally depressing—but no one remonstrated.

Again I remark, that, spite of endless *zarzuelas*, comic operas and vaudevilles, your Iberian citizen is not a musician (one can judge of this by the guttural chants called *singing* all over Spain). He likes to have his ear tickled, he cares little with what, so that there is a noise, and to spend his evenings abroad smoking. Thus, music which would make an Italian scullion howl, here passes current without a hiss.

On the whole, I preferred my bedroom, and retreated at an early hour to solitude and one candle.

Allow me to add a few addresses useful at Valladolid. At No. 7 Calle Colon, Columbus died; Cervantes lived at 14 Calle del Rastro; Calderon, the minister of s.lly Felipe III., before he was beheaded, resided at 22 Calle de Teresa Gil; the great Berruguete is found opposite San Benito El Real; and the painter, Alonzo Cano, in the first house out of Plazuela Vieja, into the Calle de San Martino.

CHAPTER XLII.

CONCLUSION.

Avila—A Mountain Fortress—Tomb of Prince Juan—Teresa de Cepeda—Her Convent—Cervantes' Ode on Her Canonisation—Hurrah for Madrid!

To Avila, through wild mountain gorges of grey granite boulders piled high, as if washed by the waves of the Deluge, and skirting the edge of giddy precipices—runs the rail.

They tell me the whole line from Irun to Madrid, belonging to the Rothschilds, is very unsafe. I can quite believe it. At first sight the town of Avila, of the same tint, seems but as a dolomitic crown fixed on the rocks themselves, until the eye discerns a circle of Gothic walls, broken at frequent intervals by castellated towers. All is severe, wind-bound, and arid—a mountain fortress, even to the Cathedral, where the machicolated apse forms a strong baston worked into the wall. War trumpets, arrows and catapults seem in the air within that stern pile bartizaned to battle; on the marble floor, under the gloom of deeply-stained windows, mailed knights should kneel, glittering lances rattle, blood-stained banners wave, and militant bishops in those twin iron pulpits, pronounce warlike orations to the boom of cannon and arquebuse.

Inside, Avila is but a sordid place: the circle of walls and towers, though perfect, strangely low and mean, formed of brown rubble; everything small and wind-bound, to be strapped down, as it were, against invasion and tempest with a stern pressure never relaxed.

Cords would not draw me to the place again. In the atmosphere of the coarse noisy *fonda* and of those cold grey walls, I seemed to grow as blank and narrow as all around.

All that I visited was a convent and a tomb. The tomb at the Dominican church of Saint Tomas, a stone's-throw from the gates, in a sunny corner, where a rent in the rocks discloses glimpses of a pleasant *vega*—in memory of Prince

Juan, only son of Ferdinand and Isabel, a youth of uncommon promise, who died before he was nineteen.

Even after the lapse of so many centuries, how keenly the parents' loss comes home to one in the minute care with which each detail of the marble monument enshrining so much love is wrought! The calm, pure upturned face of the boy, so delicate and young, wearing something of his father's earnest visage; the light regal circlet laid on the rich braids of rippling hair; the simple folds of drapery, as of a light garment for a slight youth; the small, shapely feet and aristocratic hands, and the iron gauntlets, one on either side, to show that he had already been knighted by his father for service on the field.

The mere artistic beauty of the tomb (and it *is* beautiful) is forgotten in the anguish of the loss, and this feeling is heightened, looking at two stalls opposite on the choir, where Ferdinand and Isabel often resorted to gaze down on all that was left, the effigy of their son!

Very touching, too, are the statues of his two attendants close by: the sweet, anxious face of the woman, and the quaint costume of the man, with his mailed cap and helmet, as if still guarding the young Prince in death, a longing look on their marble faces, as though they would willingly die themselves to bring him back to life and to his parents!

These lonely memorials in that ancient church, dedicated to grief, sweeping as it were with dead hands the chords of all human passion, make a mystic music which rends the soul.

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The weird aspect of Avila, shut in by barriers of mountains, is just the spot to feed the enthusiasm of a spiritist like Teresa de Cepeda.

At seven years old, Teresa desired to go to Africa to convert the Moors. At twenty she took the black veil, and in a vision was carried up into heaven and shown the plan of her reformed nunneries of barefooted Carmelites; a few years later she became the *spouse of Christ*, and took His name—a mystery still celebrated on the 27th of August, under the title of La Transverberacion del Corazon de Santa Teresa de Jesus.

Philip III. styled her Patroness of Spain, as Minerva is of Athens. Philip II. collected her writings, and preserved them like Sybilline books in the Escorial, and as late as the Peninsula War the sagacious Spanish Government, having refused the command of the Allied Armies to the Duke of Wellington, conferred that honour on Santa Teresa!

Her convent, erected over her birthplace, lies in a deep valley outside the walls. It is quite modern in aspect.

Here you may see her statue, rosary, and staff, also an apple-tree she planted.

I cannot say that Teresa interested me more than her native town. A terrible want of common-sense marks her whole career, a lack not at all objected to by mediæval Spaniards in rulers, male or female, lay or cleric, upon the principle of the Eastern Santons, who, being *fools* on earth, are esteemed *wise* in heaven. A very different character Teresa from that other ecstatic nun, the masculine-minded Catherine of Sienna, whose determined will brought the popes from Avignon to Rome, and for many years wisely swayed the Councils of Europe.

At the canonisation of Santa Teresa, three prizes were awarded for three odes to be composed in her honour. Lope de Vega was the chairman of the committee of award, and Cervantes a competitor. The Sapphic passion of the poetry of that age may be judged of by a *seguidilla* written by Cervantes' daughter, 'Espoused to the Eldest Son of God,' in Alcala, published from the original MS. by the Marquis de Molins.

Cervantes got as a prize for his ode a silver pitcher; the other two competitors, not named, eight yards of camlet for a *capa*, and a pair of silk stockings.

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And now, hurrah for laughing Madrid, the gay metropolis!—four hours from Avila by *rail*, but *ten thousand* by civilisation and sentiment! How sweet will be its crowded streets and sun-swept boulevards after the lonely cities I have seen!

Hurrah for the gaudy processions of gay *toreros*, bound to the Corrida; of bright ladies to the delicious shades of the Prado; of blue-coated officers caracoling on graceful barbs; of rattling wheels, and eternal street cries; of ever-

open theatres, suited to all tastes; of cafés tinkling to guitars, and beggars who dance and sing, happy in the sun! The capital of noise, music, and fun, with its keen transparent air, and barrier of snowy mountains—Madrid as Madrid, to which Paris is dull, Rome but a memory, and London a tomb!

THE END.

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